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A Survey of the Pneumatology of Ellet Joseph Waggoner in his Published Books and Pamphlets from 1883 – 1916

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Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

A Survey of the Pneumatology of Ellet Joseph Waggoner
in his Published Books and Pamphlets from 1883 - 1916

A Term Paper
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for THST 885
The Holy Spirit

by
Ingram R. London

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INTRODUCTION

The ministry of Ellet J. Waggoner and Alonzo T. Jones made an indelible mark on the Seventh-day Adventist Church and its theology through their proclamation of what has been coined "The 1888 Message." In consequence, Waggoner has been studied extensively in Adventist academia as well as by laypersons. However, much of this study has focused on biographical data, interpersonal conflict between Waggoner and Ellen White, and most of all, Waggoner's soteriology and Christology.

Despite the intense interest in Waggoner, no study to date has been published with a systematic explanation of Waggoner's pneumatology. The purpose of this study was to fill this gap by exploring and synthesizing E. J. Waggoner's views on the Holy Spirit as expressed in his published books and pamphlets. This research adds to the understanding of Waggoner's theology by systematizing his disparate statements referencing the nature and work of the Holy Spirit and highlighting his unique pneumatological views and their implications. However, due to Waggoner's extensive writing career, this study was limited to his published books and pamphlets which excludes his voluminous periodical publications.

METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

The research was conducted by searching Waggoner's twenty-three published books and pamphlets¹ for any mention or allusions to the ontology or work of the Holy Spirit. The keywords that were used to conduct the search included: "spirit",² "ghost", "comforter", and *paraclete*. The context, wherever these terms appeared, was then studied and categorized inductively to form topic areas. The data under these topic areas were then synthesized to produce coherent as possible tentative conclusions of Waggoner's understanding of a specific aspect of the Spirit with any developments or changes noted.

Because Waggoner's references to the Spirit were mostly practical in nature most of his statements can be categorized

¹ A chronological list of Waggoner's published books and pamphlets can be found in appendix A of Woodrow Wilson Whidden II, *E. J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to Agent of Division* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2008), 376-77. Kindle.

² In this study it was established that E. J. Waggoner's capitalization of the term "Spirit" should not be interpreted as a definite indication that he assigned personhood to the Holy Spirit. His father, J. H. Waggoner, a strong defender of the Semi-Arian views on the doctrine, including the denial of the personhood of the Holy Spirit, consistently capitalized the term "spirit" whenever he was referring to the Holy Spirit. E. J. Waggoner's use is probably along the same lines. However, E. J. Waggoner's capitalization of "Spirit" does serve as a key indicator to distinguish his common use of the term versus when he is actually referring to the Holy Spirit.

under the works of the Holy Spirit, instead of the nature and ontology of the Spirit. Regardless of the volume of material presented, this study addresses both descriptions of the Spirit's work, as well as Waggoner's infrequent statements on the nature of the Spirit.

The study is structured as follows, including: (1) a brief sketch of Waggoner's life with an identification of key theological transition points indicated, (2) a brief overview of Waggoner's views on the Trinity, (3) an analysis of Waggoner's ontology of the Spirit, (4) an analysis of Waggoner's works of the Spirit, (5) a synthesis of Waggoner's pneumatology, and (6) concluding thoughts on Waggoner's pneumatology and brief remarks on how the topic could be benefited from future studies.

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF E. J. WAGGONER (1855 - 1916)

Ellet Joseph Waggoner was the son of John Harvey Waggoner, an early Sabbatarian Adventist convert. Ellet Waggoner served the Seventh-day Adventist Church in multiple capacities but he is best known for his role in delivering what has been coined "The 1888 Message." One of the definitive moments of Waggoner's life was a spiritual experience that occurred in 1882.

Many years ago, the writer sat in a tent one dismal, rainy afternoon, where a servant of the Lord was presenting the Gospel of His grace; not a word of the text or texts used, nor of what was said by the speaker, has remained with me, and I have never been conscious of having heard a word; but, in the midst of the discourse an experience came to me that was the turning point in my life. Suddenly a light shone about me, and the tent seemed illumined, as though the sun were shining; I saw Christ crucified for me, and to me was revealed for the first time in my life the fact that God loved me, and that Christ gave Himself for me personally. It was all for me. If I could describe my feelings, they would not be understood by those who have not had a similar experience, and to such no explanation is necessary.³

The second definitive moment of Waggoner's life occurred in 1888. As co-editors of the *Signs of the Times*,⁴ Waggoner and his

³ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant* (London: International Tract Society, 1900), 5.

friend Alonzo T. Jones preached a series of messages at the 1888 General Conference in Minneapolis, MN on "righteousness by faith." There, Waggoner and Jones' message was endorsed by Ellen White, a cofounder of the Adventist Church. She would later write: "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones."⁵ After the conference Waggoner, Jones, and White went on a speaking tour of the United States preaching to Adventist congregations the message of righteousness by faith which had been largely lost sight of in the denomination's decades old bent towards legalism. Waggoner, continued to receive positive support from Ellen White until the turn of the century (1901).⁶

A third definitive moment in Waggoner's life is his attendance of the 1897 General Conference in which he heard Dr. J. H. Kellogg present an incipient form of Panentheism⁷ which

⁴ Woodrow Wilson Whidden II, "Waggoner, Ellet Joseph," in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, ed. Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2013).

⁵ Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1923), 91.

⁶ Whidden II, "Waggoner, Ellet Joseph."

⁷ The Late E. J. Waggoner is often labeled a "pantheist" but technically speaking he was actually a "panentheist." Pantheism is the belief that the world and God are one entity. The world can be equated to God. In other words, the world equals God and God equals the world. Panentheism is the belief that the world is a part of God but God is more than the world. Waggoner ideas seemed to align more with Panentheism in that he believed the presence of God was in all living things which tends towards the elevation of humanity and all life forms to divinity.

Waggoner seems to have adopted.⁸ Froom notes that Waggoner returned from England in 1897 to give a series of studies on the book of Hebrews. But at the same Conference, "...Dr. Kellogg was also there, and adroitly introduced his subtle pantheistic views at the same Conference—concepts that were destined to exert a harmful influence upon Waggoner."⁹ Waggoner's later theological developments led to a divorce from his wife, an apparent acceptance and endorsement of panentheistic ideas,¹⁰ and eventual "separation from denominational employment (1904)."¹¹ The last ten years of Waggoner's life ended in obscurity.¹² Waggoner never regained his employment as a minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and did not desire it, due to his loss of faith in the doctrine of the investigative judgment and the significance of 1844.¹³

⁸ LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Movement of Destiny* (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1971), 350, 529.

⁹ Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, 529.

¹⁰ In Waggoner's later writings he began to promote the idea that Christ was present not only in believers but in anything that was alive, including plant life. Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 248.

¹¹ Whidden II, "Waggoner, Ellet Joseph."

¹² Whidden II, "Waggoner, Ellet Joseph." Froom notes that Waggoner spent his last years teaching at the reopened Battle Creek College under J. H. Kellogg. Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, 526.

¹³ However, it should be noted that Waggoner still held to the other pillar doctrines of the church and makes mention of this in his last publication. Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *Confession of Faith*, 1916.

WAGGONER'S EARLY VIEWS ON THE TRINITY AND CHRISTOLOGY

The majority of early Seventh-day Adventists (Sabbatarian Adventists) were Arian or Semi-Arian in their understanding of the Trinity or Godhead.¹⁴ According to the *Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, Early Sabbatarian Adventists...

...believed in one God, the Father; in the Son of God (whom they saw as not eternally preexistent, but derived from the Father at some point before the creation of the world); and in the Holy Spirit (whom they viewed as an aspect of God, a manifestation of the power and presence or influence of God, but not a divine person with intellect, will, and emotions).¹⁵

Waggoner's own views seem to reflect this, especially in regards to his Christology. In 1890 Waggoner writes: "The Word was 'in the beginning.' The mind of man cannot grasp the ages that are spanned in this phrase. It is not given to men to know when or how the Son was begotten."¹⁶ Thus Waggoner affirms his belief that Jesus has not always been in existence and that he did have

¹⁴ See Jerry Moon, "Godhead," in *The Ellen G. White Encyclopedia*, ed. Denis Fortin and Jerry Moon (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2013). Also see George Knight, *A. T. Jones: Point Man on Adventism's Charismatic Frontier* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011), 167.

¹⁵ Moon, "Godhead."

¹⁶ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1890), 9.

a beginning. Waggoner elaborates further: 'We know that Christ "proceeded forth and came from God" (John 8:42), but it was so far back in the ages of eternity as to be far beyond the grasp of the mind of man.'¹⁷ And again Waggoner states, "There was a time when Christ proceeded forth and came from God, from the bosom of the Father (John 8:42; 1:18), but that time was so far back in the days of eternity that to finite comprehension it is practically without beginning." However, Waggoner denies that Christ is a created being which indicates a departure from early Sabbatarian Adventists like Uriah Smith.¹⁸ However, Waggoner still believed that Christ did not exist for all eternity past, but rather proceeded or was derived from the Father.¹⁹ In spite of Waggoner's Semi-Arian views he affirms the full divinity and equality of Jesus by stating "As the Son of the self-existent [sic] God, He [Christ] has by nature all the attributes of Deity."²⁰

¹⁷ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 9.

¹⁸ Smith would revise his very early views (ca. 1865) that Christ was a created being but he still maintained that Christ had a beginning. Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, 163.

¹⁹ "The Scriptures declare that Christ is 'the only begotten son of God.' He is begotten, not created. As to when He was begotten, it is not for us to inquire, nor could our minds grasp it if we were told." Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 21.

²⁰ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 11.

Waggoner's views on the Godhead would change in his later years to exhibit more panentheistic elements. For example, 'The cross of Christ is a present thing. The expression, "Come to the cross," is not an empty form of words, but an invitation that can be literally complied with. Christ is crucified before us, and each blade of grass, each leaf in the forest, reveals the fact.'²¹ E. C. Webster describes Waggoner's Semi-Arian beginnings as setting him on a Christological trajectory.

In time this led to a lessening of the emphasis on the historical work of Christ in His earthly life and death. The historical Christ was almost lost in the form of the existential Christ, who usurped the work and role of the Holy spirit in the heart."²²

Waggoner's views on the Holy Spirit are the subject of analysis articulated below.

²¹ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings* (London: International Tract Society, 1900), 100.

²² See footnote 248 in Eric Claude Webster, *Crosscurrents in Adventist Christology* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1992), 239-40. <http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/books/webster/index.htm>.

ANALYSIS

This study reconstructs the pneumatology of E. J. Waggoner (as far as possible) by examining his major written works.²³ This includes identifying his views on the nature or personhood of the Spirit (or lack thereof) as well as the works of the Spirit. However, Waggoner was primarily concerned with two principal theological arenas (at the height of his publishing career). These areas reflect the principle concerns and thrusts of his ministry, which dealt with soteriological issues and faith in the trustworthiness of Scripture.

Consequently, most of his statements on the Holy Spirit revolve around: (1) the Spirit's soteriological role in the saving of individual persons, and (2) the Spirit's role in the revelation-inspiration of the Scriptures. His pneumatology was of a practical nature with real ramifications in the daily life of the believer, and thus his references to the Holy Spirit fall within the realm of the works of the Spirit much more often than

²³ This study was not be exhaustive as Waggoner's extensive article publications will not be considered due to space and time limitations.

the intellectual and academic concerns of the ontology of the Spirit. However, from his emphasis on the utility of the Spirit, within the two principle areas of his theological concerns, a few key aspects of his pneumatology and how they changed over time can be deduced in regards to the ontology of the Spirit. In other words, Waggoner's understanding of the works of the Spirit which tend toward personhood, often balance his ontological statements which trend towards an impersonal force. The analysis below begins with the ontology of the Spirit followed by the works of the Spirit. Furthermore, this study uses the following articulated framework to categorize Waggoner's statements in time.

Waggoner's theological views roughly fall into three time periods: (1) Early "Semi-Arian" Waggoner from 1882-1887, (2) Middle "Righteousness by faith" Waggoner from 1888-1896, and (3) Late "Mystical" Waggoner from 1897-1916. Waggoner's early "Semi-Arian" period from 1882-1887 is demarcated by his spiritual encounter with Christ at an 1882 camp meeting in which he came to the realization that Christ died for his sins personally. His writings at the beginning of this period tended to be in step with standard denominational publications which were Arian and Semi-Arian in flavor and focused on behavioral issues as opposed to righteousness by faith. However, towards the end of this period his writings would become more Christologically centered.

Middle or "Righteousness by Faith" Waggoner captures the period of his life from 1888-1896. This period catapulted Waggoner to the heights of Adventism in terms of his influence and charismatic power after the 1888 General Conference in Minneapolis, MN. During this period Waggoner benefited from the endorsement of Ellen White, the prophet and co-founder of the Adventist Church. Waggoner's writings during this period are focused on Christ and soteriological issues. The late "mystical" period of Waggoner begins with his attendance of the 1897 General Conference in which Waggoner was exposed to the panentheistic teachings of Dr. Kellogg. As a result of this encounter Waggoner's, writings would begin to exhibit panentheistic, spiritualistic, and mystic elements. Waggoner's career would end in obscurity along with his long-time friend A. T. Jones. All three men (Kellogg, Jones, and Waggoner) would be disfellowshipped from the denomination.

ONTOLOGY OF THE SPIRIT

Grammatical Evidence

This study took into account several lines of evidence in analyzing Waggoner's grammar in relation to the Spirit including: capitalization, pronoun usage, and associated verbs and prepositions.

Capitalization

Waggoner's capitalization of "Spirit" does not conclusively indicate personhood but it does indicate divinity either intrinsically or by association, the latter being more likely. This can be determined by his father's usage of "Spirit." J. H. Waggoner, the father of E. J. Waggoner, was a staunch anti-trinitarian and advocate for the Semi-Arian views of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in J. H. Waggoner's view was simply the divine presence of the Father and/or Christ. Interestingly, J. H. Waggoner consistently capitalized "Spirit" which for him was most likely a recognition of the Spirit's association with God the Father. In other words, the Spirit was the "Spirit of God," as in belonging to God, but not its own entity.

However, because of the Spirit's close association with God, and actually being an aspect or emanation of the Father J. H. Waggoner follows the common practice of capitalizing "Spirit" which would have been natural considering that the Bibles printed at the time would have used the same grammatical practice. Consequently, his son's [E. J. Waggoner's] usage, of the capitalized form of "Spirit" cannot be used to determine anything beyond the close association of the Spirit with divinity. A positive note on E. J. Waggoner's use of the capitalized spelling of Spirit is that it makes it clearly distinguishable from the common use of the word spirit in his writings.²⁴ Whenever Waggoner uses "Spirit" it always refers to the Holy Spirit. The opposite is not true however. Ultimately, Waggoner's spelling of "Spirit" does not yield any conclusive answers in identifying Waggoner's precise ontology of the Spirit.

Pronoun Usage

E. J. Waggoner consistently uses non-gendered impersonal pronouns to refer to the Spirit, employing "It" as subject and "Its" in the possessive. He opts for gender neutral impersonal

²⁴ Examples of common use would include "spirit of antichrist" or "spirit of the times" in which the "spirit" being referred to clearly is not the Holy Spirit.

pronouns instead of the masculine singular "He" and "His." As previously mentioned, his capitalization when referencing the Holy Spirit is inconclusive except that Waggoner recognizes a close relationship between the Spirit and divinity. This study found only two possible instances in which Waggoner refers to the Spirit with a masculine singular pronoun. The statement appears in *How to Get Knowledge* (1893).

Before He went away, Christ promised to *send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter*,²⁵ and the first thing that *He* was to do was to convince the world of sin. This *He* does by revealing the righteousness of God. These reproofs come in various ways, according to the sin and the peculiarity of the person. *They are not simply of a general nature, but they come home to the individual, pointing out specific acts of wrong, and saying "Thou art the man."*²⁶

His second statement occurs in *The Everlasting Covenant* (1900).

God gives the Holy Spirit of truth; "whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth Him;" John 14:17. *but believing ones know Him*, for "that which was from the beginning," the Life, "was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness." 1 John 1:1, 2. "The Word was made flesh" in Jesus Christ, in order to demonstrate in a living Person the fact that the spiritual is real and tangible. God is not a myth. *The Holy Spirit is not a myth. His presence is just as real as He Himself.*²⁷

The ambiguity of who Waggoner is referring to in his use of the personal pronouns "He", "His", and "Him" in these two

²⁵ Unless otherwise noted all bolded text within a quotation were added by the author of this study for emphasis.

²⁶ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *How to Get Knowledge*, Apples of Gold Library, No. 4, (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1893), 3.

²⁷ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 276.

statements, is due to the fact that Waggoner is not describing the Holy Spirit in isolation but in relation to another member of the Godhead and thus making these statements inconclusive in regards to the personhood of the Spirit. When Waggoner does use pronouns the majority of occurrences employ impersonal pronouns which tends to rule out the Spirit's personhood. Froom employs this type of analysis on Uriah Smith's statements regarding the personhood of the Spirit. Froom notes that in an attempt to answer the question of "What is the Holy Spirit?" Smith always refers to the Holy Spirit with the impersonal pronoun of "it" in order to negate the personhood of the Holy Spirit.^{28, 29}

Notwithstanding ~~the~~ Waggoner's pronoun usage, in the vast majority of occurrences Waggoner does not refer to the Spirit with pronouns at all. Instead he structures his sentences in such a way as to simply refer to the Holy Spirit as "the Spirit" or by varying titles gleaned from Scripture. In other words, he uses the titles of the Spirit to refer to the Spirit as a proper noun, avoiding the use of pronouns.

²⁸ Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, 163.

²⁹ Thus, it is less likely that Waggoner, in his ontology, is simply reluctant to assign the Spirit a gender, by using gendered personal pronouns such as "He" or "She." If the latter is the case however, his use of impersonal pronouns would not necessarily negate his personhood, especially if he views the Spirit as asexual.

Verbs and Prepositions

Despite Waggoner's pronoun usage, the verbs that Waggoner uses to describe the Spirit point towards personhood and push him beyond a Semi-Arian viewpoint of the Spirit. Waggoner prepositional usages do not clearly point to personhood or non-personhood as they are often ambiguous and allow for either interpretation. These are explored in more detail below in the analysis of the works of the Spirit.

Statements on the Ontology of the Spirit

Statements on the ontology of the Spirit are few and far between in Waggoner's published books and pamphlets. However, a few are available for study. One of his first statements occurs in 1890, during his righteousness by faith period. In that statement Waggoner commented on the inner life of the Trinity, highlighting the Spirit's unique role.

Finally, we know the Divine unity of the Father and the Son from the fact that both have the same Spirit. Paul, after saying that they that are in the flesh cannot please God, continues: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Romans 8:9. Here we find that *the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ*. Christ "is in the bosom of the Father" being by nature of the very substance of God and having life in Himself.³⁰

This statement appears in the context of whether Christ is fully divine or a creature and whether worshipping Christ is proper. Waggoner responds with the statement just previously quoted. The problem is that his statement is unclear. Waggoner successfully shows that the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God are the same entity by quoting Romans 8:9, but what is unclear is whether the Spirit is its own entity. For Waggoner's argument to work, it would seem to suggest that the Spirit is not a unique personality in the Godhead but a shared presence between the two principle entities, the Father and Christ. However, this runs counter to weight of evidence in the activities the Spirit performs in Waggoner's soteriology covered in the same book. What is also unclear is whether the "very substance" or same substance that Christ and the Father are composed of is in actuality the Holy Spirit since this is what would make his argument compelling. Waggoner's wording is in line with the common belief in the Adventist church at the time. Leroy Froom records in *Movement of Destiny* a series of lectures given by Uriah Smith, *The Bible Institute* (1878). In answer to the

³⁰ Waggoner's description of the Trinity's inner life seems to be influenced by Augustine who argued that the Holy Spirit was the bond of love between the Father and the Son. Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 23. For a synopsis of Augustine's view see Fernando L. Canale, "The Doctrine of God," in *Handbook of Seventh-day Adventist Theology* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 144. Also see Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: God as Trinity* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2011), 118.

question "What is the Holy Spirit?" Uriah Smith states that the Holy Spirit is "something which is common to the Father and the Son." He continues, "In a word it may, perhaps, best be described as a mysterious influence emanating from the Father and the Son, their representative and the medium of their power."³¹ Froom notes that Smith in one paragraph, in an attempt to answer the question of "What is the Holy Spirit?" always refers to the Holy Spirit with the impersonal pronoun of "it."³² This characteristic is seen throughout Waggoner's usage as well.

The rest of the statements Waggoner makes about the ontology of the Spirit are made in 1900 and are included in Waggoner's massive works *The Everlasting Covenant* and *Glad Tidings*. In these books Waggoner states that "The Holy Spirit is the life of God."³³ Waggoner also states that "The Spirit is the universal presence of God" and that all life is dependent on the Spirit.³⁴ For Waggoner, things that last are spiritual and come from the Spirit, which implies that the Spirit will also last, and is thus eternal.³⁵ Furthermore, "God is Spirit, yet He is a

³¹ Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, 163.

³² Froom, *Movement of Destiny*, 163.

³³ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 224.

³⁴ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 227.

³⁵ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 245.

real God"³⁶ refuting the idea that anything spiritual is not an ontological reality. In a rare case Waggoner may have referred to the Holy Spirit as "Himself" in the following statement: "God is not a myth. The Holy Spirit is not a myth. His presence is just as real as Himself."³⁷ However it is most likely that Waggoner was simply trying to communicate that the Holy Spirit is the presence of God in this statement. The converting work of the Spirit in the heart of believers, is done in a tender, intimate, manner.³⁸

The previous statements, do not necessarily rule out the personhood of the Spirit, but definitely go in a different direction from the majority of his earlier statements in his publishing career in the 1880s. But those earlier statements involved the works of the Spirit. His more Arian statements begin to appear post *Prophetic Lights* (1889). The First of which was already discussed from *Christ and His Righteousness*. Turning now to Waggoner's more esoteric descriptions of the Spirit, it appears his later conceptions allowed for a more elusive Spirit that could simply be a force or presence in the world that is the spark of life and movement. For example, Waggoner's

³⁶ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 76.

³⁷ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 276.

³⁸ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 306.

explanation of the throne of God being full of the Holy Spirit, and every thought that God has is immediately executed by the Spirit. Furthermore, the temple of God and the throne room of God are filled with the Spirit.³⁹ Some of his imagery is taken from Scripture but when combined with other statements it appears that Waggoner's conception of the Holy Spirit is losing much of the personhood it once exhibited as his views trend toward a speculative pneumatology and eschatology. This becomes clear in his descriptions about the new earth.

In the world to come we shall have spiritual bodies (1 Corinthians 15:44, 45), so that we shall *be able to see spiritual things, even the Spirit of God*, as plainly as we now see men and trees and brooks on this earth. *God's Spirit, God's life, will be visible, flowing forth from the throne in a never-ending stream.* Wherever on the new earth a man finds even the tiniest trickling rill, he will know that it is one of the ramifications of the river of life, and that if he follows it up, it will bring him face to face with God on His throne.⁴⁰

Waggoner here asserts that the Holy Spirit will be visible in the "world to come." The Spirit however is not depicted as a person, but as a stream or life force flowing from God's throne.

³⁹ Quoting Ezekiel, Waggoner elaborates on the throne room scene recorded. "The throne was too glorious to be seen and described in detail; and we can form no clear conception of its likeness; but one thing we may learn, namely, that it is full of the Spirit of God, and is so closely in touch with Him that His thought for it is instantly executed. God's Spirit is to go to some place, and thither the throne of God instantly moves. Every thought of God is promptly responded to and carried out, because His Spirit fills His throne and temple." Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 360. See also Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 337.

⁴⁰ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 274.

Here the Spirit is clearly depersonalized. God's all-pervasive life force is equated to God's Spirit but nothing else is added. Here the Spirit contains no personality, no intelligent activity, or will. It is simply an all-pervasive force. Waggoner continues to elaborate on the mystical river that is the Holy Spirit:

He who does not see God's own life, and the gift of the Spirit, in the water that God gives us now, would fail to see anything wonderful in the river of life flowing from the throne of God, if he should get into heaven. "Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." Isaiah 26:10. He could not even see that river, if he were there; for it is a spiritual flood; and *he who does not develop a spiritual nature now, to see the Spirit of God, will never have a spiritual body with which to enter the kingdom.* He who has not a spiritual nature, could not use a spiritual body.⁴¹

These statements are similar in nature to others that Waggoner makes about Christ and can be found in the same book *The Everlasting Covenant*. Waggoner asserts that Christ is in humanity as well as the vegetation of the planet⁴² which also depersonalizes Jesus into a presence. This can be seen in the following statement:

Christ is "the power of God." 1 Corinthians 1:24. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily." Colossians 2:9. But God's everlasting power and Divinity are seen in the things that are made (Romans 1:20); so that here again we are

⁴¹ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 275.

⁴² Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 248.

brought to the fact of *the actual presence of Christ in all creation*.⁴³

Using the words of Scripture, Waggoner again depersonalizes Christ into a force or presence. Waggoner's attempt to show that Christ is present everywhere in all creation is a direct contradiction to another statement he made during the same period (1900) in which he espoused that the Christ can no longer be everywhere as a divine presence because of the incarnation, which is the very reason that He sent the Spirit who is not bound to a human body.⁴⁴ However, if Waggoner is not contradicting himself, then this would suggest that the pervasiveness of Christ's presence is actually accomplished through the Spirit. Waggoner makes an interesting claim in *Glad Tidings* that would suggest this very situation. Describing the mystical conversion of the Galatians Waggoner writes:

"Who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?" Jesus was set forth before the Galatians, when Paul preached to them, as openly crucified before their eyes. *So vivid was the presentation, that they could actually see Christ crucified. It was not skilful word-painting on the part of Paul, nor imagination on the part of the Galatians, for then it would have been only deception. No; it was an actual fact; Christ was there, crucified, before their eyes, and Paul by the Spirit enabled them to see Him. [...] The experience of the Galatians in this matter was not peculiar to them. The cross of Christ is a present thing. The expression, "Come to the cross," is not an empty form of words, but an invitation that can be literally complied with. Christ is crucified before us, and each blade of grass, each*

⁴³ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 248.

⁴⁴ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 90.

leaf in the forest, reveals the fact. Yea, we have the testimony in our own bodies, in that, although sinful and corruptible, we yet live. Not until one has seen Christ crucified before his eyes, and can see the cross of Christ at every turn, does one know the reality of the Gospel. Let those scoff who will; the fact that a blind man can not see the sun, and denies that it shines, will not deter one who sees it from talking of its glory. Many there are who can testify that it is something more than a figure of speech, when the apostle says that Christ was crucified before the eyes of the Galatians. They have had the experience. God grant that this study of Galatians, before it is finished, may be the means of opening the eyes of many more, so that they may see Christ crucified before their eyes, and know Him crucified in them and for them.⁴⁵

Waggoner's description of what happened to the Galatians mimics his own testimony of seeing Christ crucified.⁴⁶ What should be noted is that the Holy Spirit is identified as the medium by which Christ can appear crucified before unbelievers and believers alike. It was *by the Spirit*, according to Waggoner, that Paul was able to present the actual Christ before the Galatians so that they could see the crucified Jesus in some mystical way. The Spirit (and Christ) seem to be depersonalized in two different ways. Christ becomes an event, a point in time. The Spirit becomes a medium or tool to project the Christ crucifixion event. The Spirit is no longer dynamic and flexible, which is the picture Waggoner presents in his earlier works discussed below. In his early and middle period writings, The

⁴⁵ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 100.

⁴⁶ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 5.

Spirit is described with person-like qualities, striving with sinners and guiding believers in their relationship with God.

References to the Trinity

A few other interesting details appear in Waggoner's writings in regards to the Trinity which depict an Arian or Semi-Arian bent. In *A Series of Readings* (1883-1884) Waggoner states that the papacy was hindered in its development due to the opposition of Arian tribes "...—those who were opposed to the doctrines held by the Catholics, chiefly that of the trinity."⁴⁷ Note that Waggoner does not capitalize Trinity, which was his practice with any other noun associated with the Godhead. Also, in *Prophetic Lights* (1889), Waggoner includes a quotation that mentions the Trinity within a long "stream of corruption" that entered post Apostolic early Christianity. Afterwards, Waggoner comments: "Thus was the church becoming paganized, and not long did it take to complete the transformation."⁴⁸ Curiously though, in his critique of the Church Fathers, Waggoner does not attack

⁴⁷ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College*, 2 vols. (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1883-1884).

⁴⁸ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1889), 95.

the Trinity when discussing Tertullian.⁴⁹ However, according to some scholars, Waggoner made significant progress in his understanding of Christ's equality with the Father; unfortunately he never seemed to embrace a full orthodox conception of the Trinity or Godhead.⁵⁰

The turning point in Waggoner's understanding of the Godhead probably occurs in 1897. According to Arthur White,

Elder Waggoner, representing the British field, attended the General Conference session of 1897 and gave a series of eighteen studies on the book of Hebrews. He also presented the sermon on the last Sabbath of the conference. Dr. Kellogg was also at this session and spoke frequently, and there introduced his pantheistic views—views which were to have a far-reaching influence on Elder Waggoner.⁵¹

The effect can be seen in Waggoner's published books as the more speculative elements of his theology seem to emerge post 1897 and are clearly manifested in his massive works published in 1900. Waggoner's soteriology from 1888 to 1897 forced him into a more orthodox understanding of Christ, but he fell short of embracing an orthodox Trinitarian God. Whidden states:

It could well be that while he sensed the vital importance of the full equality of the shared natures of both the Father and

⁴⁹ Waggoner's chapter on Tertullian is missing any critique of the Trinity even though Tertullian coined the term. Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1888), 184-216.

⁵⁰ Whidden II, *E. J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to Agent of Division*, 261-62.

⁵¹ Arthur Lacey White, *What Became of A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner* (Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., 2018), xix. See also Whidden II, *E. J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to Agent of Division*, 274.

the Son (for a clear understanding of the meaning of Christ as atoning sacrifice and mediator), Waggoner never seemed to fully appreciate the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity for its emphasis on the coeternity of the three persons of the Godhead.⁵²

Waggoner's later encounters with Kellogg and being under his influence seemed to bar any further progress in Waggoner's conception of the Trinity and even retrograded his views which exhibited the depersonalization of both Christ and the Spirit.

Essentially Waggoner's ontology of the Spirit exhibits his Arian or Semi-Arian upbringing. The Spirit is ~~a~~ devoid of personality. However, due to his studies in soteriology, which demanded a more orthodox view of Jesus, Waggoner's conception of the Spirit seems to have also been elevated as will be seen later in the examination of the works of the Spirit.

Unfortunately, Waggoner's connections with Kellogg seemed to have permanently damaged Waggoner's conception of God, by adopting Kellogg's mystical views of God's presence pervasive throughout nature, essentially depersonalizing the Spirit again by an overemphasis of Christ's immanence.

⁵² Whidden II, *E. J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to Agent of Division*, 262-63.

WORKS OF THE SPIRIT

The Works of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

Analysis - The Works of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

Nearly all of Waggoner's statements in regards to the Old Testament and the Spirit come from his later material from 1895 - 1900. Waggoner affirms that "The spirit of the Old Testament is the Spirit of Christ."⁵³ Waggoner also affirms the presence of the Spirit at creation and he affirms the Spirit's power to bring order out of chaos and equates the Spirit to be the very life of the universe. (Job 27:3)⁵⁴

Most of Waggoner's references to the Old Testament concern Abraham and Isaac and come from his massive volumes *The Everlasting Covenant* and *Glad Tidings* both published in 1900. Waggoner states that Abraham received the Spirit before being circumcised (symbolizing his righteousness by faith experience).⁵⁵ Waggoner repeatedly states that Isaac was born of

⁵³ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Gospel in Creation* (London: International Tract Society, 1895), 8.

⁵⁴ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 227, 101.

the Spirit and that his birth was miraculous.⁵⁶ Furthermore, all believers are children of Abraham if they are born after the same manner as Isaac, who was born after the Spirit.⁵⁷

Ontological Insights - The Works of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

The Spirit in the Old Testament is depicted as having divine creative power, bringing order out of chaos. The Spirit possesses divinity and power and is able to grant and create life. He is also able to spawn new spiritual life in believers. In regards to the Spirit's works in the Old Testament, the concept of the Holy Spirit being merely a force (such as a life force) is not completely ruled in Waggoner's pneumatology but neither is the personhood of the Holy Spirit. Thus, any overall ontological insights would be inconclusive. However, his later views, especially the Spirit being the life of the universe, definitely tend toward a Semi-Arian viewpoint.

⁵⁵ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 507.

⁵⁶ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 76-77, 82. See also Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 183.

⁵⁷ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 78.

The Works of the Holy Spirit in the
Earthly Ministry of Christ

**Analysis - The Holy Spirit in the
Earthly Ministry of Christ**

In a question and answer Bible study guide entitled, *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College* (1883-1884), Waggoner affirmed the role of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of Christ. In his exposition of the 490-day prophecy in Daniel 9, Waggoner identifies the Holy Spirit as either the means or object by which Jesus, the messiah, is anointed. In question 37 of the Daniel 9 section he asks "When did Jesus receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit?" and in question 38 he asks "What did Jesus do after his anointing by the Holy Spirit?"⁵⁸ [emphasis added] Several years later, Waggoner reaffirms the role of the Spirit in anointing Jesus as messiah at His baptism in *Prophetic Lights* (1889).⁵⁹ Waggoner comments further on the anointing of Christ.

⁵⁸ Waggoner, *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College*, 23.

⁵⁹ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 13.

In the same book, after briefly summarizing the 490-year prophecy he states: "If the Jews, therefore, had been attentive to the prophecies that were in their hands, and had heartily believed them, they would have acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah as soon as they saw the Holy Spirit descend upon him at his baptism."⁶⁰ In 1900 (*Glad Tidings*) Waggoner again affirmed this aspect of the Spirit's anointing of Jesus and equates the Spirit with "the oil of gladness."⁶¹ This detail suggests that Waggoner's final view was that the Holy Spirit was the "object" or "substance" by which Christ was anointed. This view is confirmed in his major work *The Everlasting Covenant* also published in 1900, in which he states: "...Jesus was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism."⁶² The use of the preposition "with" removes the ambiguity of earlier statements. For Waggoner the Holy Spirit is essentially the anointing substance that descends or is poured on Christ to inaugurate His ministry. This consequently depersonalizes the Spirit to a degree.

Though most of Waggoner's references to the Holy Spirit's work in the life of Christ dealt with the baptism and inaugural anointing of his earthly ministry, Waggoner does describe

⁶⁰ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 15.

⁶¹ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 225.

⁶² Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 484.

briefly the Holy Spirit's work in the actual ministry of Christ.

Returning to *Prophetic Lights* (1889), Waggoner states:

The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, were well versed in the Scriptures. [...] And yet they had steeled their hearts against the *strivings of the Holy Spirit*, until they could be the unconscious instruments in the fulfillment of prophecies with which they were perfectly familiar. They had received ample proof of the divinity of Christ, but had refused to accept it.⁶³

Here we see the striving or convicting work of the Holy Spirit was already present during the ministry of Christ on earth even before the Pentecost event.

Waggoner also sees the "power of the Spirit of holiness" as the catalyst for the resurrection.⁶⁴ In Waggoner's middle and later writings (1893-1900) he mentions Christ's promise to send the Holy Spirit several times. His emphasis is on the relationship of Christ to the Holy Spirit, with the Holy Spirit serving as a mediating presence, making the presence of Christ accessible to all believers. For Waggoner, "Jesus is the Comforter"⁶⁵ because when Jesus was on earth "he was the *embodiment of the Spirit*"⁶⁶ which limited his ability and reach,

⁶³ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 19.

⁶⁴ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 13.

⁶⁵ He supports this conclusion based on 1 John 2:1 and John 14:16, 17. Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 290.

⁶⁶ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 290.

being incarnated. Consequently, after his ascension Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to the New Testament Church. Waggoner states:

By the Spirit, His [Jesus'] own personal presence, He can dwell in every man on Earth, and fill the heavens as well, a thing which Jesus in the flesh could not do. Therefore, it was expedient for Him to go away, and send the Comforter [the Holy Spirit].⁶⁷

In summary, for Waggoner, the Spirit's presence was involved in the baptism of Jesus which inaugurated his role of Messiah and began His ministry. Furthermore, the Spirit was actively working in the hearts of those Jesus was attempting to reach, including his opponents the religious leaders of his day. The Spirit's power resurrected Jesus. Finally, the Spirit was sent after the ascension of Christ so that Christ's presence could be mediated to the Church until the *Parousia*.

Ontological Insights - The Holy Spirit in the Earthly Ministry of Christ

In regards to the nature of the Spirit, Waggoner seems to view the Spirit as a substance or presence, especially when it involves the anointing of Christ at His baptism. In his early writings his use of the "anointing of the Holy Spirit" is an ambiguous phrase. The Holy Spirit could be the subject performing the action of anointing, which would indicate

⁶⁷ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 90.

personhood, or the Holy Spirit could be the object, medium, or substance that is used to perform the anointing. The latter would tend to negate personhood, and is more likely what he intended to communicate, given his Semi-Arian upbringing. The can be said in his use of the phrase "anointing by the Holy Spirit." However, any doubt in his view is removed in his later works, in which the Spirit is the substance by which Jesus is anointed, thus removing the personhood of the Spirit to a degree.

In his commentary on the Spirit's work in the lives of Christ's contemporaries Waggoner does seem to indicate the personhood of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit "strives" with human beings which suggests a relationship between persons. Also, he asserts that it was the power of the Holy Spirit that resurrected Jesus from the dead. His statement can be taken either way. It could imply that there is some semblance of personhood to the Spirit which has power to grant life or it may simply suggest that the Holy Spirit is a powerful life granting force. The latter is probably what Waggoner means since his statement about the resurrection comes from his later material.

Waggoner's commentary on the giving of the Spirit is somewhat cryptic and ambiguous. Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit have the title of "Comforter" (which he successfully defends from Scripture but doesn't elaborate on whether they are

distinct persons). But what adds a significant level of complexity to his ontology of the Spirit is his statement that Christ was "the embodiment of the Spirit." Here we see perhaps a merging of identities between Jesus and the Holy Spirit which is difficult to reconcile with other earlier statements.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Revelation-Inspiration

Analysis - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Revelation-Inspiration

Waggoner's first reference to the work of the Holy Spirit in regards to revelation-inspiration occurs in his early work *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College* (1883-1884). Here Waggoner states that the apostle Paul was influenced by the Holy Spirit in the writing of his epistles.⁶⁸ He does this to infer that the Spirit cannot influence in two different directions. In other words, the Spirit would not influence two Bible writers to produce contradictory and mutually exclusive messages. Thus, when studying the Bible, the reader should seek to harmonize what may appear to be contradictions, since the Bible is really

⁶⁸ "Could he [Paul], then, writing under the influence of the same Spirit, call the same law 'enmity?' Certainly not." Waggoner, *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College*, 45.

the production of one Author, the Holy Spirit. Waggoner essentially makes the same argument in *The Gospel in the Book of Galatians* (1887), this time opting to use the phrase "leadings of the Spirit of God."⁶⁹ Waggoner states: 'This one thing is certain, if, the ceremonial law was nailed to the cross, then the apostles, *acting in harmony with the leadings of the Spirit of God*, would not declare a part of it to be "necessary things."' Notice, the apostles are said to act "in harmony" with the leadings of the Spirit which suggests that the apostles have agency in the inspiration process. Waggoner's main point however is that the Holy Spirit is the entity that preserves the non-contradictory nature of the Scriptures. He will continue to affirm this belief throughout his publishing career.⁷⁰

Unfortunately, before 1888 Waggoner does not provide more information about his understanding of how the Holy Spirit inspires the Scriptures. Based on the few passages he produced before 1888, it seems that Waggoner's view of inspiration is a matter of influence and leadings with the prophet and the Spirit working in harmony with each other, which seems compatible with

⁶⁹ Waggoner in this sentence mentions that the apostles worked in "harmony" with the Spirit would suggest that inspiration allows for some sort of agency within the human prophet or apostle. Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Gospel in the Book of Galatians: A Review*, A letter to George I. Butler, dated Feb 10, 1887, (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1888), 13.

⁷⁰ See Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 255.

what is known as thought-inspiration. However, without further elaboration from Waggoner during this period, a definite theory of inspiration cannot be deduced.

In 1888 Waggoner quotes from *Rose's Neander* the following: "While in other cases such a transition [into apostasy] is usually quite gradual, in this case we find a sudden one. Here there is no gradual transition, but a sudden spring; a remark which is calculated to lead us to a recognition of the *peculiar activity of the divine Spirit in the souls of the apostles*."⁷¹ Waggoner's apparent intention in the use of this quote is to discredit the writings of the Apostolic Church Fathers. The reference he uses contrasts the quality of the documents produced by the Apostles in the New Testament and that of the Apostolic Fathers. Waggoner does not provide comment on the quotation regarding the work of the Spirit so it cannot be assumed that Waggoner agrees with the particular point contained in the last phrase Neander was making. It should be noted however, that the locus of inspiration occurs in the "souls of the apostles" for Neander. If this was all Waggoner had written or quoted in *Fathers of the Catholic Church* one could conclude that Waggoner at this point was an advocate of thought-inspiration. However, Waggoner clarifies his understanding of

⁷¹ Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church*, 73.

inspiration in the appendix of the same book. Waggoner states the following:

But throughout the New Testament the seventh day of the week is called the Sabbath—the same title that is given to it in the commandment. *This is not because the New Testament writers were Jews, for they did not write as Jews, but as men inspired by the Holy Spirit.* They were Christians, writing, under guidance of the Spirit of God, for the comfort, encouragement, and instruction of Christians until the end of time. If the seventh day were not the Sabbath for Christians and for all men, then *the Holy Spirit would not have given it that name.*⁷²

In the preceding quotation, Waggoner adds specificity to his description of the nature of inspiration. The Spirit not only guides the authors of the Bible in their writing, but apparently even dictates at least some of the content written by the prophets and apostles. The latter aspect seems to point to either a shift or at the very least a sharpening and elaboration of Waggoner's early published views on inspiration. Waggoner appears to be at the threshold of embracing either a mechanical or verbal-inspiration model.⁷³ He seems to suggest that the Holy Spirit can override the cultural baggage and presuppositions of the Biblical author when under the Spirit's "guidance." Waggoner

⁷² Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church*, 356.

⁷³ A mechanical inspiration would essentially make the human prophet or apostle a tool for dictation, while in the verbal model the Holy Spirit "aids him in choosing the most appropriate words to describe what God has revealed to him. It is granted that God will use each prophet within the limitations of his own vocabulary." See Norman R. Gulley, *Systematic Theology: Prolegomena* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2003), 304.

will elaborate on his understanding of inspiration further the following year in *Prophetic Lights*.

In the preface of *Prophetic Lights* (1889) Waggoner compares the authorship of history books to the authorship of the "Spirit of God" in prophecy as "writing history in advance." He argues that divine prophecy is a "light" and not something that should be considered incomprehensible or mysterious until it is actually fulfilled. Waggoner writes:

God, who sees the end from the beginning, and who "calleteth those things that be not as though they were," is able to write the history of an event before it occurs far more exactly than any human pen can write it afterward. Now if we can understand history when written by men, why should it be thought a thing impossible that we should understand the history when *written in advance by the Spirit of God?*⁷⁴

Waggoner views the Holy Spirit as the Author of Scripture as demonstrated in the following quotation.

It [prophecy] is something that is more sure than anything that man has seen; it is something that comes direct from "the Spirit of truth." Men's eyes may deceive them; but the word of prophecy does not depend upon any human faculty; it "came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they [the prophets and apostles] were moved by the Holy Ghost." *Men were simply the unresisting mouth-pieces of the Spirit of God; it spoke the words, and they had no voice in the matter.*⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 5.

⁷⁵ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 32.

Here, Waggoner is clearly advocating either a verbal or mechanical model of inspiration. This quote tends towards the mechanical which is essentially dictation. In this endeavor however, he makes the Spirit the "dictator" and the prophet or apostle is merely an accurate scribe with nothing to contribute to the inspiration process except the mechanical use of their bodies to put pen to paper. Waggoner states: "...Prophecy is something that has in it *nothing human*, but is *wholly divine*. No *human frailty* enters into it, but it comes direct from the Holy Spirit."⁷⁶ Waggoner here embraces not only the verbal or mechanical model of inspiration but also the theory of Biblical inerrancy. Waggoner continues to elaborate on this point by using the story of the prophet Balaam as a use case.⁷⁷

With the previous quotations in mind, it becomes clear that Waggoner does not allow for a more flexible thought-inspiration model but retains a rigid verbal-inspiration or mechanical-inspiration framework from which his ambiguous statements on inspiration may be interpreted. For example, Waggoner speaks of the Spirit as the one who "moves" the prophet Isaiah to speak as

⁷⁶ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 33.

⁷⁷ Waggoner is probably mistaken to use Balaam as a use case as Balaam seems to be an exception within Scripture as a model of inspiration instead of the rule. Balaam is insubordinate and does not want to cooperate with God while a typical prophet seems to be a willing spokesperson for God's oracular pronouncements.

well as the prophet Jeremiah.⁷⁸ Waggoner has here, in mind, verbal-inspiration. The same holds when he mentions that the Holy Ghost taught Jeremiah the words to speak. "From the lips burning with the touch of the almighty hand, Jeremiah poured forth the words 'which the *Holy Ghost teacheth*.'" ⁷⁹ Waggoner would continue in this line of thinking in *Christ and His Righteousness* (1890), in stating that the words of Isaiah the prophet were really the words of the Spirit of God.⁸⁰

Waggoner, never departed from his understanding of Scripture as verbally or mechanically inspired. From at least 1888 to 1900 (and most likely for the rest of life),⁸¹ Waggoner perceived the Holy Spirit to be the sole Author of Scripture who chooses the words of Scripture.

It was in an exhortation to the Jews to keep the commandments (which shows that they were not already doing so), that Moses said: "The Word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, *that thou mayest do it*." Deuteronomy 30:14. And in quoting this passage, in Romans 10:6-8, *the Holy Spirit*, since Christ is the Word, *makes the substitution of the one name for the other*, distinctly telling us that Christ is in us all, in order that we may be able to serve the Lord. This truth is

⁷⁸ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 34, 36.

⁷⁹ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 36.

⁸⁰ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 11.

⁸¹ "It was the Spirit of Christ that testified in the ancient prophets; and so the Scriptures are the 'testimony of Jesus'— the 'testimonies' to which the Psalmist so frequently refers." Waggoner, *Confession of Faith*, 6.

also set forth in the statement that "the Word was made flesh."⁸²

He also continued to affirm that the Spirit's involvement in inspiration sufficiently obliterated any trace of the human instrument's personality or cultural baggage. Waggoner states in 1891: "They [the New Testament writers] were, therefore, not swayed by early training or Jewish prejudice, for the Holy Spirit is not susceptible to such influences."⁸³

Though it appears that Waggoner's understanding of inspiration was more flexible at the beginning of his publishing career (1883-1887), in which he uses the words "influence" and the prophets working in "harmony" with the "leading of the Spirit" to describe the inspiration process. However, by 1888 Waggoner seems to have fully embraced a verbal or mechanical inspiration model along with inerrancy. The Holy Spirit is truly in every sense the Author of Scripture for Waggoner. The human prophet or apostle is simply the Holy Spirit's tool or pen.⁸⁴ Because of his views and the role of Biblical inspiration in Waggoner's overall theology, he consequently provides much more

⁸² Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 492.

⁸³ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *Sunday: The Origin of Its Observance in the Christian church*, Bible Student's Library, No. 80, (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1891?), 6.

⁸⁴ Waggoner's description of his view on inspiration mimics the concepts of channeling and automatic writing.

material throughout his career about the work of the Holy Spirit (in regards to inspiration) which provides clues to his ontology of the Spirit.

Ontological Insights - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Revelation-Inspiration

As previously stated, Waggoner in his early publishing years referred to the Spirit's work in inspiration as an influence or leading. However, by 1888 Waggoner embraces a much more rigid model of inspiration: namely verbal-inspiration along with inerrancy. For Waggoner, "The Word of God is the voice of the Spirit of God."⁸⁵ Consequently, his high view of Scripture and how Scripture came into being seems to have forced him to embrace a high pneumatology. Not only is the Spirit an influence or leader in the inspiration process, the Spirit is really the sole Author of Scripture and thus begins to take on person-like qualities. The Spirit teaches, speaks, writes; the Spirit puppets the Bible writers as writing instruments. The Spirit for Waggoner is not just an influencer but an overwhelming entity that controls the prophet and prevents the prophet from coloring the Biblical text with any "human frailty" or cultural baggage.

⁸⁵ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans* (1891 General Conference Bulletin, 1891), 73.
<http://adventpioneerbooks.com/media/Bible%20Studies%20on%20the%20Book%20of%20Romans-Waggoner/bor.pdf>.

Waggoner's high view of Scripture required a high pneumatology.⁸⁶ By 1888, even if Waggoner was still Semi-Arian in profession, in practice, in theological reflection, and in exegesis he was functionally trinitarian, which included the adoption (even if subconsciously) of an active, person-like Holy Spirit.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Illumination

Analysis - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Illumination

Regarding the Spirit's work of illumination Waggoner quotes a source entitled "The Ancient Church" which argues that God allowed the early Church Fathers to err on so many things so that later generations would be able to see that close chronological proximity to the apostle's time did not guarantee that one "knew more of the *mind of the Spirit* than others who appeared in succeeding ages..."⁸⁷ This statement essentially means that the believer should not have implicit trust in the writings of the Church Fathers and their interpretations of Scripture simply because of the Church Father's access and/or close proximity to the apostles chronologically. Knowing the "mind of

⁸⁶ Waggoner at this time was also developing a higher Christology and grace-oriented Soteriology in his theological framework which may also have contributed to his embracing of a higher pneumatology.

⁸⁷ Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church*, 70.

the Spirit," the correct interpretation of the Scriptures is available throughout the Christian dispensation wherever individuals have access to the Bible. In *Prophetic Lights* (1889), Waggoner states: "From these texts we learn that no matter how much one may have heard Christ, he doesn't know him if he has not received the revelation which God alone can give by his Spirit."⁸⁸ Thus, for Waggoner, the Spirit's illumination is a critical necessity to interpret the words of Christ (the Scriptures) accurately.

In Waggoner's middle and later years (post 1889), he refers to the Holy Spirit's work in illumination much more often. Waggoner wrote that only the Holy Spirit can reveal the spiritual meaning of Scripture.⁸⁹ The Spirit, in Waggoner's ontology, provides the depth of meaning that believers so often search for in personal Bible study. Waggoner writes: "When our minds are illuminated by the Holy Spirit, although the word will appear simple, at the same time there will be heights and depths to it that will fill us with amazement."⁹⁰ However, Waggoner did not see this illumination as something magical, but as the

⁸⁸ The context of this statement involves Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ. See Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 24.

⁸⁹ Waggoner, *Sunday: The Origin of Its Observance in the Christian church*, 53.

⁹⁰ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 24.

result of constant effort and study "guided by the Spirit."⁹¹ It was the illumination of the Spirit that led the reformers to study and understand the gospel in Galatians and Romans.⁹² Though Waggoner affirms the illumination of the Spirit in helping believers to understand the Bible for themselves, he also acknowledges a prerequisite of a willingness to obey what will be revealed by the Spirit's leading.⁹³ The illumination of the Spirit, for Waggoner, evolves the entire intellect⁹⁴ and he advocated that ministers and evangelists should preach from the illumination of the Spirit.⁹⁵ But Waggoner did not limit the Spirit's ability to simply illuminating the minds of believers in studying Scripture, but also in the study of the reality of Christ himself. In 1900, Waggoner stated that it was only by the Holy Spirit that contemporaries of Christ were able to recognize that Jesus was more than a man but divine.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 178.

⁹² Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 5.

⁹³ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 33.

⁹⁴ "The Spirit of God can make a dumb man eloquent; without the Spirit, all the eloquence of the most accomplished orator amounts to nothing." Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 178.

⁹⁵ Waggoner, *Confession of Faith*, 6.

⁹⁶ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 90.

Ontological Insights - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Illumination

In Waggoner's view the Spirit has revelatory/illuminating power. The Spirit also has a mind. The Spirit teaches, instructs, and guides to deeper understandings of the Scriptures and of Jesus Christ. To not assign personhood to the Spirit, would seem to nullify the meaning of these passages. Thus, the personhood of the Spirit would seem to be a functional necessity in order for the Spirit to execute His abilities to explain the Scriptures to believers.

The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Prevenient Grace and Conviction

Analysis - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Prevenient Grace and Conviction

In *The Gospel in the Book of Galatians* (1887) Waggoner mentions the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting sinners of their need to repent. He vividly describes the Holy Spirit as an entity that "causes the prison walls to close in upon him, his cell becomes narrower, and he feels oppressed; and then he makes desperate struggles to escape."⁹⁷ He then makes the argument that the Spirit is the catalyst that "aids" the law in helping

⁹⁷ Waggoner, *The Gospel in the Book of Galatians: A Review*, 49.

sinners to see their guilt.⁹⁸ Without the Spirit's assistance, the law is ineffective in convicting a sinner's conscience. He also references the Spirit as using the Scriptures as a sword for the same purpose.⁹⁹

However, the work of the Spirit in convicting sinners does not override the sinner's cognitive abilities or freewill (as seems to be the case in his post 1887 views on revelation-inspiration and the Spirit's effect on human prophets). The Spirit strives with humanity and has been striving with humanity since the fall, but the Spirit's influence can be resisted and resisted successfully.¹⁰⁰ Waggoner commenting on the inhabitants of the antediluvian world states: "For one hundred and twenty years his Spirit was seeking to draw them away from sin; and not until it was useless to strive longer did God withdraw his Spirit."¹⁰¹ Though the prevenient grace of conviction is available to all of humanity, mediated by the Spirit, continual resistance will result in the withdrawal of the Spirit. This indicates relationship.

⁹⁸ Waggoner, *The Gospel in the Book of Galatians: A Review*, 53.

⁹⁹ Waggoner, *The Gospel in the Book of Galatians: A Review*, 53.

¹⁰⁰ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 132.

¹⁰¹ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 155.

In addition to convicting and striving with humanity. The Spirit also "enkindles" hatred for sin and implants a desire for righteousness within those that surrender to the Spirit's influence. Waggoner states:

The new heart is a heart that loves righteousness and hates sin. It is a heart of willingness to be led into the paths of righteousness. It is such a heart as the Lord wished Israel to have when he said, "O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children forever!" Deuteronomy 5:29. In short, it is a heart free from the love of sin as well as from the guilt of sin. But what makes a man sincerely desire the forgiveness of his sins? It is simply his hatred of them and his desire for righteousness, *which hatred and desire have been enkindled by the Holy Spirit.*¹⁰²

For Waggoner, the effect of successfully convicting the sinner, brought about by the Holy Spirit, is a "new heart." He continues his description of the Spirit's work:

The Spirit strives with all men. It comes as a *reprover*. When its *voice of reproof* is regarded, then it at once assumes the office of comforter. The same submissive, yielding disposition that *leads* the person to accept the *reproof of the Spirit*, will also lead him to follow the *teachings of the Spirit*, and Paul says that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Romans 8:14.¹⁰³

The Spirit is indispensable in the plan of salvation as an activating agent to bring conviction to the sinner. This conviction, if not resisted, leads to regeneration (new heart), the forgiveness of sins (justification), and to living a life

¹⁰² Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 66.

¹⁰³ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 67.

led by the Spirit (sanctification). In Waggoner's soteriology, the effectiveness of the atonement of Christ is activated by the Spirit. This is due to what appears to be a relationship of interdependence between Waggoner's soteriology, his doctrine of Scripture, as well as his pneumatology. By 1888 Waggoner is preeminently concerned with soteriological issues. But his soteriology is rooted in the divinity and power of Christ's words (the Scriptures).¹⁰⁴ This emphasis demanded a high view of Scripture, Scripture being the word or "testimony of Jesus." But this high view of Scripture required a high pneumatology. This interdependence will be revisited again when analyzing the grounds of assurance of salvation in Waggoner's soteriology. Essentially, Waggoner in spite of his Semi-Arian upbringing reverse-engineered a more orthodox view of the Holy Spirit because of his commitment to a Biblical soteriology.

Later in Waggoner's writing career, he continued to emphasize the convicting power of the Spirit of God. Waggoner states "...the law is in the hands of the Spirit an active agent in inducing men to accept the fulness of the promise."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Several chapters in at the beginning of *Christ and His Righteousness* seem unrelated to the topic of salvation. It is not until Waggoner covers how to personally receive salvation that his introductory material begins to make sense. Salvation is only effective because of divine power. See Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 8-45.

¹⁰⁵ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 144.

Waggoner is also clear in his later period that the intentions of the Spirit's convicting and "reproofs" are "not for the purpose of taunting us with our failures, nor for the purpose of causing us to cringe in terror before Him, but that we may turn from our sins to righteousness."¹⁰⁶ The Spirit confronts individuals with their past sins, only when they have been left unconfessed.¹⁰⁷

However, one particular statement demands special attention in regards to Waggoner's pneumatology and prevenient grace. Typically, when Waggoner refers to the Spirit in third-person he uses impersonal pronouns which implies a denial of personhood to the Spirit. However, in the book *How to Get Knowledge* (1893) Waggoner provides a possible aberration from his usual practice.

Before He went away, Christ promised to *send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter*, and the first thing that *He* [the Holy Spirit?] was to do was to convince the world of sin. This *He* [the Holy Spirit?] does by revealing the righteousness of God. These reproofs come in various ways, according to the sin and the peculiarity of the person. *They are not simply of a general nature, but they come home to the individual, pointing out specific acts of wrong*, and saying "Thou art the man."¹⁰⁸

Though an argument could be made that "He" in this statement refers to Christ, it would seem that the natural reading would assign "He" to "the Holy Spirit as a Comforter." Again, this is

¹⁰⁶ Waggoner, *How to Get Knowledge*, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 93.

¹⁰⁸ Waggoner, *How to Get Knowledge*, 3.

an unusual aberration in Waggoner's pneumatology in which he normally refers to the Spirit as "It" or "Its." Beyond, this Waggoner also seems to indicate that the Spirit does not convict sinners of their general sinfulness only, but is intentional and specific in pointing out the sinner's errors. The use of the masculine pronoun and the implication that the Spirit thinks, evaluates and chooses which sins to convict a sinner about all suggest personhood. If so, Waggoner by 1893 had at least momentarily crossed into theological orthodoxy in regards to his pneumatology.

Even in *The Everlasting Covenant* (1900), which was written well into his panentheistic phase, Waggoner affirms, once again, person-like qualities for the Holy Spirit. Waggoner states that the Holy Spirit had "wishes" or desires and wanted Christ's Jewish contemporaries to understand that the promised Abrahamic inheritance could only be received through Jesus and the resurrection.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately, many of Waggoner's other statements in the same book seem to negate this occurrence of person-like qualities in the Spirit.

Ontological Insights - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Prevenient Grace and Conviction

¹⁰⁹ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 51.

Along with revelation-inspiration, Waggoner's soteriology seems to demand a high pneumatology. The Spirit once again takes on person-like attributes. The Spirit convicts, speaks reproof, strives, comforts, leads, and can even withdraw from individuals. The Spirit has wishes, desires, and seeks to fulfill objectives. Most of the terms are indicative of relationship which would necessitate active intelligent agents on both sides of an action. Though Waggoner does not definitively claim the personhood of the Spirit, it would be unlikely, given his dependence on a high pneumatology, to be able to relegate the Spirit to simply being an influence, force, or presence. Looking at one last quote from Waggoner on the convicting power of the Spirit made in 1900, Waggoner states that it is the overwhelming convicting power of the Holy Spirit that makes the sinner confess "...the reality of God and the Holy Spirit..."¹¹⁰

The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Justification

Analysis - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Justification

Waggoner's first reference to the Holy Spirit in regards to justification occurs in 1888 in *Fathers of the Catholic Church*.

¹¹⁰ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 147.

Speaking on the sinner's uniting with Christ (justification)

Waggoner states the following:

From this text [1 Corinthians 12:12, 13] it appears that although literal baptism is the sign of union with the church of Christ, the outward sign may exist without the reality, since the real union is a spiritual union. *The one who puts on Christ, and thus becomes a son of God, must be born of the Spirit as well as of water.*¹¹¹

For Waggoner, the Spirit is the active agent in the justification phase of the soteriological process. Being born of water (baptism) is insufficient without being born of the Spirit as well (adoption and justification). Waggoner, here does not give much detail about the Spirit's role in the justification event, but he leaves no doubt that the Spirit is essential. As the reality of spiritual union with Christ, adoption and justification, is not found in the physical baptismal act but in being "born of the Spirit."

Statements from Waggoner's middle and late periods, give more detail on the Spirit's role in justification. For Waggoner, the Spirit teaches believers to continually "trust all" to Christ, preventing a fall from grace into legalism (attempting to earn the forgiveness of sins through obedience).¹¹² Any spirit, Waggoner states, that encourages an attempt to earn forgiveness is the spirit of the antichrist and not the Spirit

¹¹¹ Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church*, 53.

¹¹² Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 121.

of God.¹¹³ Waggoner, continued to denounce legalism till the end of his publishing career.¹¹⁴ The forgiveness of sins is based on the death of Christ on the sinner's behalf and "we know it because the Holy Ghost says that it is so."¹¹⁵ Note the Spirit acts with agency to testify of what Christ has done.

Waggoner, spent a great deal of time in his later works (primarily *Glad Tidings* and *The Everlasting Covenant*) explaining his understanding of the significance of circumcision and how it became a symbol of legalism or justification by works. Once again, He vigorously refuted the notion that justification could be earned throughout his publishing career and employed the dichotomous relationship of circumcision of the flesh (to refer to legalism) and circumcision of the heart by the Spirit (justification by faith) several times.¹¹⁶ He also seemed to equate circumcision by the Spirit to being "born of the Spirit"¹¹⁷ and being born of the Spirit leads to the removal of sins and their spiritual consequences and adoption into the

¹¹³ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 121.

¹¹⁴ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 113.

¹¹⁵ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Cross of Christ* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Pub. Co., 1894), 7.

¹¹⁶ For example see Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 205, 06.; Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 93.

¹¹⁷ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 93.

family of God (justification).¹¹⁸ Waggoner states that "Christ through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God"¹¹⁹ and the Holy Spirit tells us through Scripture that our sins were purchased by Christ on account of this fact.¹²⁰ For Waggoner salvation is found in Christ, but Christ grants salvation only to those who drink of the Spirit which grants eternal life.¹²¹ Thus the Spirit mediates justification to believers.

Ontological Insights - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Justification

Though Waggoner doesn't give too many direct statements on the Spirit's ontology from the work of justification, he does however confirm a belief in three divine entities. The individual who wishes to receive salvation must: (1) put on *Christ*, which (2) makes him a son of *God*, all of which is achieved by (3) being born of the *Spirit*. Whether the Spirit, here is considered a full person is not definite, but his

¹¹⁸ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 247. Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 65.

¹¹⁹ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 128.

¹²⁰ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 17.

¹²¹ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 246. Waggoner elsewhere equates the Spirit to the water of life which he claims explains Biblical expressions that describe the Spirit as being "poured out," shed forth," and poured on believers. See Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 267, 68. He even suggests that the presence of water in the physical world should always remind of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 275.

statement tends toward a three co-eternal Trinity working together to achieve the salvation of humanity. At times Waggoner does seem to speak of the Spirit as acting with agency by pointing believers to Christ and mediating the atonement to sinners.

The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit: Receiving the Spirit

Analysis - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit: Receiving the Spirit

Early in Waggoner's publications (1883-1884), he addresses the need for possessing the Holy Spirit. For Waggoner, the possession of the Spirit is the proof of adoption and a new status before God as His child.¹²² This idea will be a recurring theme throughout his life. Returning again to a previously considered quote on baptism in *Fathers of the Catholic Church* (1888), Waggoner states:

From this text it appears that although literal baptism is the sign of *union with the church of Christ*, the outward sign may exist without the reality, since *the real union is a spiritual union*. The one who puts on Christ, and thus becomes a son of God, must be *born of the Spirit* as well as of water. John 3:5. "Now if any man *have not the Spirit* of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9), no matter what his profession may be. Nor is it sufficient to *have once received the Spirit of God*. Paul exhorts us not to *grieve the Spirit of God* (Ephesians 4:30) and warns us against doing *despite* [scorned] to it (Hebrews 10:29)¹²³

¹²² Waggoner, *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College*, 44.

Waggoner affirms the necessity of the possession of the Spirit. For Waggoner, the Spirit must be received and possessed in order to actualize the believer's adoption into the family of God, baptism being the outward sign. But beyond this Waggoner affirms that the Spirit should only be received once, but must be received regularly, indicating that the believer must maintain an openness to the Spirit's leading throughout her life. The Spirit should not be grieved (through disobedience) or ignored. Continuance of these activities presumably will result in a withdrawal of the Spirit. Waggoner continues to explain that the reception of the Holy Spirit results in "bearing fruit" for Christ, which he defines as the exhibition of a Christlike life.¹²⁴

Waggoner elaborates on the conditions of receiving the Spirit in *Prophetic Lights* (1889) in which he states that one must be a citizen of the kingdom of grace in order to be given the Holy Spirit.¹²⁵ He uses Matthew 12:28 to support this assertion. Commenting further on the kingdom of Grace concept, Waggoner suggests that the Spirit's work (which is present

¹²³ Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church*, 53.

¹²⁴ Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church*, 53.

¹²⁵ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 165.

wherever the kingdom of grace is present) is done silently.¹²⁶
Waggoner points to John 3:8 to support this idea.

In 1890, Waggoner once again affirms the necessity of possessing the Spirit and its significance as the internal sign of adoption and the entity that makes believers alive in Christ.¹²⁷ In 1891, Waggoner reveals how the Spirit is actually requested and received, by simply asking for it in prayer.

First, we have the fact presented that we may have the Spirit of God. How do we get it? By asking. Go back to the eleventh chapter of Luke. Christ says, "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? . . . If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Make a personal application of that text. When you kneel down to pray for the Spirit of God, which is all powerful and will cleanse from all sin, quote that to the Lord.¹²⁸

Waggoner not only prescribes the method for receiving the Spirit, he also affirms that the Father is eager to give the Spirit to believers.¹²⁹ In *The Power of Forgiveness* (1894) Waggoner states that "The word received in faith brings the Spirit and the life of God to the soul."¹³⁰

¹²⁶ Waggoner, *Prophetic Lights: Some of the Prominent Prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, Interpreted by the Bible and History*, 165.

¹²⁷ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 69.

¹²⁸ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 70. See also Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 268.

¹²⁹ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 71.

In receiving the Spirit, Waggoner also uses the temple motif. In *The Everlasting Covenant* (1900) Waggoner writes: "those who *yield themselves to God*, to be His spiritual house, His temple, are filled with the Spirit, and are guided by the Spirit whithersoever the Spirit wills to go. The mind of the Spirit is their mind."¹³¹ Here Waggoner, highlights the need for a yielding submissive attitude in order to filled with the Spirit. This filling then makes the believer a temple for which the Spirit can dwell in. Waggoner affirms, as he does on the topic of justification, that the Spirit cannot be earned through obedience but must be asked for and received by faith.¹³²

Ontological Insights - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit: Receiving the Spirit

In his references on how to keep the Holy Spirit Waggoner mentions the need to not grieve or do despite (scorn) to the Holy Spirit. As previously mentioned in other sections, his language suggests the existence of a dynamic relationship between the Holy Spirit and the individual. The Holy Spirit can

¹³⁰ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Power of Forgiveness* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1894), 3.

¹³¹ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 361. Humility is also a prerequisite for the reception of the Spirit. See Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 240. Waggoner also affirms "grace" as a prerequisite. See Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 30.

¹³² Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*.

be "hurt" by the rejection and disobedience of those the Spirit wishes to influence. This type of language again suggests intelligence, agency, and personhood. Furthermore, Waggoner states: "The Holy Spirit is Christ's personal representative. Christ sends Him, that He¹³³ may abide with us forever" and by yielding to the Spirit's influence Christ takes possession of the believer.¹³⁴ Waggoner's language clearly states that the Holy Spirit is a representative of Christ (and thus cannot be Christ or an emanation of Christ). This statement implies that the Holy Spirit is His own Person, distinct from Christ.

The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit as Intercessor

Analysis - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit as Intercessor

Though Waggoner does not comment much on the intercessory role of the Spirit he does mention it on two occasions at least, in his published books and pamphlets. The first and most extensive treatment of the subject was in 1891. Speaking about how the Spirit helps with the infirmities of the believer, Waggoner states:

¹³³ Who Waggoner is referring to by employing the personal pronoun "He" is unclear.

¹³⁴ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 34.

I have thought so much sometimes [...] that Christ Himself prayed for us, and that the Holy Spirit *itself* is making intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered. Brethren, while we can ask for others to pray for us, cannot we take hold by faith and appropriate the prayers that are being continually offered for us in heaven above? Even if the brethren do not pray for us, we have the joy and the comfort of *knowing that Christ and the Spirit are praying for us.*¹³⁵

Waggoner here makes two important points in regards to the Holy Spirit. The explicit message is that the Spirit is active in interceding for believers. The implicit point that Waggoner has made is that he has distinguished each member of the Godhead by relegating both Christ and the Spirit into intercessory roles. Christ and the Spirit are here depicted as praying for believers, and thus it is correctly assumed that the one receiving the intercession and prayers is the Father. Once again, whether Waggoner is cognizant of the fact or not, he has affirmed the reality of the Trinity and even the full personhood of the Spirit. Waggoner continues with his explanation of the intercessory work of the Spirit:

...I go to God, and lay my soul open before Him, and ask Him to give me – what shall I ask for? Sometimes the words are gone, and I can think of nothing, only an inexpressible desire for something more than I have; *but the Holy Spirit knows what I need, and knows the mind of God.* It knows just what God has to give me, and so *it makes intercession for me,* and God gives exceeding abundantly above all I can ask or think. *The Spirit of God takes those thoughts that we cannot put into words, and can scarcely think, and it transmutes them into words and petitions* before the throne of God, and He that searcheth the hearts of men knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 77-78.

Even if Waggoner never cognitively accepted the full personhood of the Spirit, his description of the work betrays a functional, vibrant, Trinity in his theological subconscious framework. Once again, the personhood of the Spirit is distinguished from the Father. The Spirit knows and read the believers mind and innermost desires. The Spirit also knows the mind of God. The Spirit makes intercession by translating the thoughts of the believer into "words and petitions" that would be acceptable before God. The Personhood of the Holy Spirit described in this passage would be difficult to deny, despite his use of impersonal pronouns. Waggoner's other reference to the Spirit's intercession towards the end of his publishing career, was made in passing in which he affirms that "Every prayer inspired by the Holy Ghost is a promise of God..."¹³⁷

Ontological Insights - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit as Intercessor

Waggoner's conception of the work of the Holy Spirit as an intercessor seems to force him into at least a functional Trinity, whether he conceived himself as a Trinitarian or not.

¹³⁶ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 78.

¹³⁷ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 248.

The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Sanctification

Analysis – The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Sanctification

For Waggoner, the Spirit's role in the sanctification of the believer is critical. Waggoner argues early on, that being led by the Spirit and walking with the Spirit implies freedom from condemnation of the law, because believers who have the Spirit keep the law and exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.¹³⁸ It should be noted that Waggoner seems to view the human agent as somewhat passive in the sanctification process. He is adamant that the laws "requirement" is *fulfilled in the believer* as opposed to the concept that the believer needs to fulfill the law.¹³⁹ This fulfilling of the requirement is done by the Spirit. Several years later, Waggoner will affirm this paradigm in *Christ and His Righteousness* (1890). Waggoner states: "How the Spirit works in a man to subdue his passions, and to make him victorious over pride, envy, and selfishness, is known only to the Spirit..." Though Waggoner initially claims that the Spirit's method of subduing the believer's carnal nature is a mystery he

¹³⁸ Waggoner, *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College*, 47.

¹³⁹ Waggoner, *A Series of Readings Covering a Portion of the Ground Embraced in the Bible Course at Healdsburg College*, 43.

does provide one example of how the Spirit actualizes the power of sanctification. Specifically, Waggoner asserts that the Spirit impresses believer's minds with encouraging verses while they are under the duress of temptation.

Then, as we pray, the promise of God comes to our mind, brought there by the Holy Spirit. It may be that we can think of no special promise that exactly fits the case, but we can remember that "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15), and that He "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Galatians 1:4), and we may know that this carried with it every promise, for "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32.

Then we remember that God can speak of those things that are not as though they were. That is, if God gives a promise, it is as good as fulfilled already. And so, knowing that our deliverance from evil is according to the will of God (Galatians 1:4), we count the victory as already ours and begin to thank God for His "exceeding great and precious promises." As our faith grasps these promises and makes them real, we cannot help praising God for His wonderful love, and while we are doing this, our minds are wholly taken from evil and the victory is ours.¹⁴⁰

The activity of the Spirit in bringing to the believer's remembrance the promises of Scripture is God's response to the believer's plea for help in conquering temptation.

Waggoner also explains that victory over temptation is possible if the believer has access to divine power, just as Christ did. This divine power comes from Christ and is mediated

¹⁴⁰ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 83.

by the Holy Spirit. Essentially for Waggoner, if you have the Spirit of Christ [the Holy Spirit] then you have Christ and His power as well. This power then serves as a resource of spiritual strength to draw upon when tempted.¹⁴¹

For Waggoner, the Spirit's role in sanctification is critical. Even within his work *Christ and His Righteousness* which is almost exclusively focused on Jesus and soteriology, Waggoner mentions the Holy Spirit several times in his role of supplying power to the believer through mediating the divine power of Christ and reminding the tempted believer of the

¹⁴¹ "But someone will say, 'I don't see any comfort in this for me. To be sure, I have an example, but I can't follow it, for I haven't the power that Christ had. He was God even while here on earth; I am but a man.' Yes, but you may have the same power that He had if you want it. He was 'compassed with infirmity,' yet He 'did no sin,' because of the Divine power constantly dwelling within Him. Now listen to the inspired words of the apostle Paul and learn what it is our privilege to have: For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be *strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man*; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:14-19.

Who could ask for more? Christ, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, may dwell in our hearts so that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. What a wonderful promise! He is 'touched with the feeling of our infirmity.' That is, having suffered all that sinful flesh is heir to, He knows all about it and so closely does He identify Himself with His children that whatever presses upon them makes a like impression upon Him and He knows how much Divine power is necessary to resist it, and if we but sincerely desire to deny 'ungodliness and worldly lusts,' He is able and anxious to give to us strength 'exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think.' All the power which Christ had dwelling in Him by nature, we may have dwelling in us by grace, for He freely bestows it upon us." Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 29.

promises of God in Scripture. The Spirit actualizes the sanctified life of the believer.

In Waggoner's works spanning the middle and later periods (1891-1900), sanctification continues to loom large as well as the Holy Spirit's critical role in the process. In *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans* (1891) Waggoner mentions that room is made for the Holy Spirit to work in the heart by studying Scripture.¹⁴² Waggoner also affirms that law keeping under the New Covenant is not meritorious but rather the outliving of the life of Christ.¹⁴³ Indeed, for Waggoner, law keeping is impossible before receiving the Spirit.¹⁴⁴ The cleansing of the heart from sin is accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁵ The Spirit circumcises the heart by producing obedience in the believer.¹⁴⁶ This circumcision most likely involves what Waggoner calls the imprinting of the Ten Commandments on the heart.¹⁴⁷ Waggoner describes Abraham as

¹⁴² Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 103.

¹⁴³ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 69.

¹⁴⁴ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *Letter and Spirit*, Apples of Gold Library, No. 37, (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1897), 2.

¹⁴⁵ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 70.

¹⁴⁶ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 373.

¹⁴⁷ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 343, 90.

manifesting "the true Spirit of Christ" because he was not self-seeking in his dealing with his nephew Lot.¹⁴⁸

What makes sanctification possible in the life of the believer is the new birth experience and this is essential to Waggoner's understanding of sanctification in preparation for the *eschaton*. When believers experience the new birth, they are in the same position as Jesus in being born of the Holy Ghost at the incarnation. Thus, they are equipped to reproduce the moral astuteness of the life of Christ. The Spirit is an integral component of Waggoner's view of the sanctification of the remnant. He states "There is danger in delaying to yield to this working of the Lord by his Spirit..."¹⁴⁹ In the last days, according to Waggoner, God will demonstrate that what he did with Jesus can be done in anyone. But this demonstration will not be done with only a few people but a large group of believers. What distinguishes them is that they, like Stephen in the book of Acts, will be full of the Holy Ghost.¹⁵⁰ Obedience to law is a critical component of the gospel in Waggoner's soteriology. For him, a Christian that speaks against the law is simultaneously speaking against the Spirit. In Waggoner's view

¹⁴⁸ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 58.

¹⁴⁹ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 367.

¹⁵⁰ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 366.

there is no such thing as a Christian that does not need to keep the law. Anyone who teaches a gospel that espouses antinomianism is delusional in his view.¹⁵¹

Another prominent component in Waggoner's understanding of sanctification is the merging of the mind of the Spirit into the believer. For Waggoner: "To be spiritually minded is to have the mind of the Spirit of God; and to have His life and righteousness."¹⁵² Thus the production of good works is ineffective without the presence of the Spirit and adopting the Spirit's "mind", perspectives, and moral compass. Waggoner elaborates on this concept even further in the following quotation:

That God designs to think and act for His people, is shown by His call to the wicked to forsake their way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and to return to the Lord, whose thoughts are so much higher than man's thoughts as heaven is higher than the earth. Isaiah 55:7-9. When a man forsakes his ways and thoughts, and returns to the Lord, his ways and thoughts henceforth must be God's.

When God thinks for a man it is not like one man's thinking for and imposing his will on another. There is perfect freedom. *The man chooses God's thoughts, because they are better than his own, and then God thinks in him, the man's brain being the organ of the Holy Spirit.* "For ye have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear," Romans 8:15. but God has given us the Spirit "of power and of love, and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7. Only by the Spirit of God can anybody rightly know anything. 1 Corinthians 2:12. When men submit to be the temples of God, then is God's will done on earth even as it is done in heaven.

¹⁵¹ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 225.

¹⁵² Waggoner, *The Gospel in Creation*, 53.

Thus, for Waggoner, sanctification is encompassing for the believer in terms of their behavior and even in their thoughts, and in one instance even states that "His [God's] Spirit will become their [believer's] spirit."¹⁵³ Here we see echoes of Waggoner's understanding of how the Spirit inspires the Bible writers. Sanctification, like inspiration, seems to imply that the Spirit controls the believer voluntarily. Indeed, Waggoner's conception of sanctification is to be filled with the fullness of God.¹⁵⁴ The obedience produced by believers is actually the work of the Spirit who frees the believer from enslavement to sinful habits, causing him or her to find joy and pleasure in obeying God.¹⁵⁵ The believer is never left alone to struggle with temptation. Waggoner states that the believer is admonished to walk in the Spirit which is composed of: (1) distrusting self, and (2) receiving and confessing Christ.¹⁵⁶ Waggoner, does not deny the presence of carnal desires (the flesh) in the believer, but he affirms that true children of God, if yielded, will be controlled by the Spirit despite living in the flesh.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵³ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 361.

¹⁵⁴ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 359.

¹⁵⁵ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 193.

¹⁵⁶ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 207.

¹⁵⁷ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 226, 28.

Ontological Insights - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Sanctification

It is difficult to come to any conclusion except that Waggoner affirms the personhood of the Spirit in some places (especially before 1900) and subtly removes personhood in others (primarily in 1900). Waggoner's description of how the believer is aided by the Spirit is telling in regards to his ontology of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is an intelligent entity. In Waggoner's soteriology, the Spirit selects Bible verses to bring to the remembrance of the believer. Once again, the activities of the Spirit tend to suggest personhood instead of a mere force or presence.

However, there are several statements made in 1900 that would seem to deny the personhood of the Spirit. Waggoner states that the mind of the Spirit can become the mind of the believer and that the Spirit of Christ can become the Spirit of the believer. Though these ideas are not foreign to the Bible, his elaboration and fascination with these concepts seems to indicate that he sees something more, perhaps even ontological and akin to *theosis* (divinization), a merging of the divine and the human. At the same time Waggoner makes the following statement which places him back into the camp of orthodox

Trinitarian belief, three personalities in one divine being, working towards a common purpose.

The Spirit is the representative of Christ. Therefore, the Spirit dwelling in men is Christ in men the hope of glory. And Christ in men, is creative power in men creating them new creatures. The Spirit is given "according to the riches of His glory," Ephesians 3:16. and that is the measure of the power by which we are to be strengthened. So, the riches of the glory of the inheritance, made known through the Spirit, is nothing less than the power by which God will create all things new by Jesus Christ, as in the beginning, and by which He will create man anew, so that he may be fitted for that glorious inheritance. Thus, it is that when the Spirit is given in the fullest measure, those to whom He is given taste "the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come." Hebrews 6:5.¹⁵⁸

Most of the evidence points to a personified Holy Spirit, but some statements seem to negate this conclusion.

The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Glorification

Analysis - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Glorification

In Waggoner's later publications, specifically those in 1900 the Spirit becomes much more prominent. In *The Everlasting Covenant* (1900), Waggoner who until now has affirmed the Spirit's role in the justification and sanctification of believers, now also affirms the Spirit's role in glorification. According to Waggoner, believers possess the Spirit, and this

¹⁵⁸ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 36.

possession of the Spirit guarantees their future resurrection.¹⁵⁹
The future reality of glorification and resurrection is also related to what Waggoner calls "the hope of righteousness by faith" which will be fulfilled by inhabiting the recreated new earth.¹⁶⁰

Ontological Insights - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit in Glorification

Little can be gleaned from Waggoner's perspective on the Holy Spirit's role in glorification. Whatever the nature of the Spirit, its ability to wield or activate resurrection power would make it a power that belongs to divinity alone, or a Person who is unquestionably divine.

The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit for Assurance of Salvation

Analysis - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit for Assurance of Salvation

In the concept of assurance of salvation, Waggoner's main theological thrusts of (1) soteriology and (2) a high doctrine of God come together in Waggoner's pneumatology. Waggoner's argument for full and complete assurance of salvation is

¹⁵⁹ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 119.

¹⁶⁰ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 207-09.

grounded in his pneumatology, specifically the Spirit's role in the revelation-inspiration process. His views on assurance can be found in *Christ and His Righteousness* (1890).¹⁶¹

For Waggoner, assurance of salvation is evidenced by "the witness of the Spirit." But this witness of the Spirit is found in the testimony of Scripture combined with the faith of the believer. Addressing a hypothetical individual struggling with assurance, Waggoner states:

Surely all doubt as to acceptance with God ought to be set at rest. But it is not. The evil heart of unbelief still suggests doubts. "I believe all this, but-." There, stop right there. If you believed you wouldn't say "but." When people add "but" to the statement that they believe, they really mean, "I believe, but I don't believe." But you continue, "Perhaps you are right, but hear me out. What I was going to say is, I believe the Scripture statements that you have quoted, but the Bible says that if we are children of God we *shall have the witness of the Spirit and will have the witness in ourselves, and I don't feel any such witness*. Therefore, I can't believe that I am Christ's. I believe His word, but I haven't the witness. I understand your difficulty. Let me see if it cannot be removed."¹⁶²

Waggoner does not reprimand the fictitious interlocuter which suggests that Waggoner agrees with the concept that assurance of salvation is based on the witness of the Spirit. Waggoner then proceeds to remove the "difficulty."

¹⁶¹ Waggoner published three short treatises, in 1890, one of which was entitled *Full Assurance*. However in that work he only references the Spirit once by quoting Rev 22:17. See Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Full Assurance of Faith*, Bible Student's Library, No. 64, (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1890), 13.

¹⁶² Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 74.

If you did [believe], you would have the witness. Listen to His word, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself; he that believeth not God hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son." 1 John 5:10. To believe in the Son is simply to believe His word and the record concerning Him.

And "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." You can't have the witness until you believe, and as soon as you do believe, you have the witness. How is that? Because your belief in God's word is the witness. God says so. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hebrews 11:1.

If you should hear God say with an audible voice that you are His child, you would consider that sufficient witness. Well, when God speaks in His word, it is the same as though He spoke with an audible voice, and your faith is the evidence that you hear and believe. ¹⁶³

Notice Waggoner's insistence that the witness of the Spirit is in actuality equated to having faith in the Scriptures. But as can be seen from his other writings, the trustworthiness of the Scriptures is based on verbal or mechanical inspiration and the fact that God cannot lie. Waggoner continues to elaborate:

*Now how does It [the Holy Spirit] bear witness? By bringing to our remembrance the Word which has been recorded. It inspired those words (1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21), and, therefore, when It brings them to our remembrance, it is the same as though It were speaking them directly to us. It presents to our mind the record, a part of which we have quoted. We know that the record is true, for God cannot lie. We bid Satan be gone with his false witness against God, and we believe that record, but if we believe the record, we know that we are children of God, and we cry, "Abba, Father."*¹⁶⁴

For Waggoner the Spirit bears witness by bringing to the believer's remembrance the words of Scripture. For Waggoner, the

¹⁶³ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 75.

¹⁶⁴ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 76.

Spirit cannot lie because it is the Spirit of Truth.¹⁶⁵ In *Christ and His Righteousness*, Waggoner's soteriology, verbal or mechanical inspiration of the Scriptures, and pneumatology converge. They are interdependent and without both the elements of verbal-inspiration and an active intelligent Holy Spirit, his soteriology collapses. Waggoner continued to use his "witness of the Spirit" argumentation for assurance of salvation in *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans* (1891) without any major alterations.¹⁶⁶

Another major component of assurance of salvation that Waggoner developed in his later books (though it was introduced in in *Bible studies on the Book of Romans*)¹⁶⁷, was the concept of the Holy Spirit as a token or an earnest deposit from God notifying the believer that they had been adopted into the family of God and were now joint-heirs with Christ. Waggoner states: "This seal of the Holy Spirit is the pledge of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession."¹⁶⁸ Waggoner defined the inheritance/possession, for which the Holy

¹⁶⁵ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 76.

¹⁶⁶ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 70-73.

¹⁶⁷ "The earnest, the pledge, of that inheritance is the Spirit of God." Waggoner also refers to the Spirit as "advance payment." See Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 116. See also Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 36, 77.

¹⁶⁸ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 29. Also see Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 29, 30, 36, 37, 133, 57, 411.

Spirit is a token, and to which believers are entitled to, in different ways. He sometimes defines the inheritance as "the blessing of Abraham" which would indicate land.¹⁶⁹ He may have the same idea in mind when he defined the inheritance as the new earth.¹⁷⁰ Waggoner also defines the inheritance as the Spirit's promise of freedom from disobedience which is a taste in and of itself of the world to come.¹⁷¹

Waggoner also makes a passing remark that the Spirit is the entity that reveals to believers that they are already sitting "in heavenly places with Christ."¹⁷² It is the Spirit that reveals to believers all the riches and blessings that they have in Christ and it is the believer's duty to accept and believe them in faith.¹⁷³ Another line of argument for assurance used by Waggoner is ironically connected with the Spirit's work as a reprover. 'God sends the Spirit to convict. He doesn't do a partial work. He shows us what he wants us to confess "and when we have confessed them, we have met the mind of the Spirit of God, and we are free.'¹⁷⁴ What Waggoner is saying, is that there

¹⁶⁹ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 126.

¹⁷⁰ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 131.

¹⁷¹ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*.

¹⁷² Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 202.

¹⁷³ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 202.

¹⁷⁴ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 66.

is no need for believers fret over their assurance when their conscience is clear from any reproof from the Spirit. In other words, if the Spirit is not bringing anything to your attention, there is no need to worry about your standing before God.

Though not specifically mentioning assurance of salvation Waggoner states the following:

The Spirit strives with all men. It comes as a *reprover*. When its voice of reproof is regarded, then it at once assumes the office of *comforter*. The same submissive, yielding disposition that leads the person to accept the reproof of the Spirit, will also lead him to follow the *teachings* of the Spirit, and Paul says that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Romans 8:14.¹⁷⁵

Here Waggoner, reveals an important aspect of assurance of salvation in his soteriology, specifically the Spirit's involvement at every step of the process. The Spirit is flexible and dynamic. It reproves, comforts, leads, and teaches. What Waggoner seems to suggest is that the Spirit is ubiquitously present for the believer and is able to attend and respond to the believer's need. At no point is the believer left on her own to navigate the process of salvation. This sentiment is repeated extensively in Waggoner's later published books *The Everlasting Covenant* and *Glad Tidings*. One of Waggoner's statements in *Glad Tidings* summarizes his view nicely: "We can no more live righteous lives by our won strength than we could beget

¹⁷⁵ Waggoner, *The Full Assurance of Faith*, 67.

ourselves. The work that is begun by the Spirit, must be carried to completion by the Spirit."¹⁷⁶ The bottom line of the assurance of salvation and the Holy Spirit for Waggoner can be summed up in the following quotation.

The difference between the two covenants may be put briefly thus: In the covenant from Sinai we ourselves have to do with the law alone, while in the covenant from above, we have the law in Christ. In the first instance it is death to us, since the law is sharper than any two-edged sword, and we are not able to handle it without fatal results; but in the second instance we have the law "in the hand of a Mediator." *In the one case it is what we can do; in the other case it is what the Spirit of God can do.*¹⁷⁷

Ontological Insights - The Soteriological Work of the Holy Spirit for Assurance of Salvation

A careful study of Waggoner's soteriology reveals an active, intimately involved, Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the activating agent in the believer's assurance of salvation. Indeed, it is faith in the Spirit's *inability* to lie in its dictation of the Scriptures that guarantees the believer's salvation. It is the Spirit's presence at every step of the believer's salvation process that allows him or her to experience assurance that they will complete the Christian life successfully. The Spirit is guide and friend, which once again necessitates intelligence and the ability to foster

¹⁷⁶ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 102. See also Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 188, 231. See also Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 91, 530.

¹⁷⁷ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 188.

relationship, both of which entail personhood. Waggoner also prominently features the Spirit's work as a witness to the assurance of salvation for the believer, which again implies personhood. A mere force or presence would not seem to be able to fulfill this role, therefore the Spirit must have some kind of agency and intelligence in order to communicate to the believer their standing with God. The presence of the Spirit is not the witness alone in the majority of Waggoner's writings; the presence must be combined with the Spirit's testimony (what the Spirit has stated in the Scriptures).

However, there is a curious quality to Waggoner's description of the Spirit. Though, it is difficult to not see person-like qualities in his description of the Spirit's activities, Waggoner repeatedly and consistently uses an impersonal pronoun to refer to the Holy Spirit. This does, to some degree, suggest that Waggoner may not yet accept the full personhood of the Spirit in his apparent reluctance to refer to the Spirit with gendered pronouns such as "He" or "His". That being said, the majority of evidence surveyed in his early writing career points to the Spirit possessing agency and personhood. The latter works point to the possession of the Spirit as more of a token; however, this does not necessarily negate the personhood of the Spirit, in his pneumatology.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Mission

Analysis - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Mission

In one of Waggoner's first books, *The Honor Due to God* (1884), his first mention of the Holy Spirit dealt with the mission of the remnant church. Near the end of the book, which was primarily focused on Sabbath observance and tithing, Waggoner states:

Even now the enemy is coming in like a flood, and *the Spirit of the Lord is lifting up a standard against him*. Satan is mustering all his forces for a last, desperate struggle; he is determined to deceive the whole world. But the message of the third angel, warning man against the worship of the beast and his image (Revelation 14:9-15), and preparing them for the coming of the Saviour, must go with a loud cry. Means are needed more and more every day, to carry forward the great work; and as the conflict increases, and approaches its consummation, the loyal soldiers of Jesus, realizing that earthly wealth will soon lose all its value, will know that the time has come to sell, and will throw out not only themselves, but all that they have, into the cause of truth.¹⁷⁸

Here Waggoner addresses the need for Christians to be ready to divest themselves of all their assets in order to have means to support the last evangelistic thrust of God's people predicted in Revelation 14:9-15. Waggoner indicates that he believes that the final eschatological movements were apparently taking place in his day and that one of the works of the Holy Spirit is to

¹⁷⁸ Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Honor Due to God* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1884), 60.

impress those that observe the seventh-day Sabbath and return tithe to divest themselves completely of their financial assets in order to combat the spread of error, namely here the observance of Sunday as a day of worship. The Spirit is an organizing element for the remnant's activities. Waggoner's brief mention of the Spirit provides the first instance of what will be a major building block in Waggoner's pneumatology, which is the convicting power of the Spirit to move human beings to make certain decisions or perform certain actions in line with God's will.

One other middle period reference to the Spirit and mission is made in Waggoner's *Fathers of the Catholic Church* (1888). Waggoner states: "True Christianity did not invoke the aid of the temporal power, but made its conquests by the aid alone of the Spirit, and by its sword, which is the word of God."¹⁷⁹ Here the Spirit aids not only individual believer's but the church at large to accomplish its evangelistic enterprises. Borrowing Biblical language, Waggoner refers to the Bible as the sword of the Spirit. In Waggoner's pneumatology, the Spirit is actively aiding the church and guiding the church in the accomplishment of its mission. Along the same lines Waggoner states in *The Gospel in Creation* (1895) that the words (Scripture) that the

¹⁷⁹ Waggoner, *Fathers of the Catholic Church*, 344.

Holy Ghost "teacheth" should be used to spread the gospel as opposed to philosophy.¹⁸⁰

Waggoner acknowledges that the power behind the church's mission is the Holy Spirit, but Waggoner goes further to explain how the Spirit empowers the church.¹⁸¹

As Christ was the temple of God, and His heart God's throne, so we are the temples of God, that He should dwell in us. But God cannot be confined. *The Holy Spirit cannot be hermetically sealed up in the heart. If He¹⁸² is there His glory will shine forth.* If the water of life is in the soul it will flow out to others. As God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, so He takes up His abode in His true believers, putting into them the word of reconciliation, making them His representatives in Christ's stead to reconcile men to Himself. To His adopted sons is the wonderful privilege given of sharing the work of His only begotten Son. *Like Him they may also become ministers of the Spirit; not merely ministers sent forth by the Spirit, but those who shall minister the Spirit.* Thus, as we become the dwelling-places of God, to reproduce Christ again before the world, and living streams flow from us to refresh the faint and weary, heaven is revealed on earth.¹⁸³

Again, Waggoner sees an interesting interplay between divinity and the church. Believers are to become "ministers of the Spirit." What Waggoner means, by "minister[ing] the Spirit" is unclear but he may have in mind the ritual of laying on of hands such as what is recorded in the book of Acts to impart the Holy Spirit to others. What is clear, is that the possession and

¹⁸⁰ Waggoner, *The Gospel in Creation*, 93.

¹⁸¹ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 406.

¹⁸² Waggoner's use of "He" may refer to the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸³ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 280.

presence of the Spirit is essential to the Church's mission in bringing salvation to the world. The Spirit's presence cannot be hidden, using believers as conduits to influence others.¹⁸⁴

Waggoner also states that it is the Holy Spirit that binds the body of Christ together in unity and when the fullness of the Spirit's indwelling in the church will be accomplished, the gospel will be preached to the entire world triggering the *Parousia*.^{185, 186}

Waggoner also comments on the inter-relational aspects of church life and the Spirit's influence. Waggoner identifies the Spirit as the motivating agent that moved Paul and Barnabas to go to Jerusalem and settle the matter of circumcision for gentiles in Acts 15.¹⁸⁷ Waggoner also states that to reprove a fellow believer, one must be certain that they are speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit¹⁸⁸ and that it is necessary to examine one's own "walk" with the Spirit before correcting or confronting a fellow believer.¹⁸⁹ Finally, Waggoner

¹⁸⁴ See also Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 367-68.

¹⁸⁵ Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 468.

¹⁸⁶ For more on the Spirit's influence and the unity of the church see Waggoner, *The Everlasting Covenant*, 380, 403.

¹⁸⁷ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 65.

¹⁸⁸ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 236.

¹⁸⁹ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 237.

affirms that "Those who are moved by the Spirit of God will always be quick to discern the workings of the Spirit in others."¹⁹⁰

Ontological Insights - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Mission

It is quite telling, that at the beginning of Waggoner's writing career, the Spirit is an active organizing element in the life of the remnant church. It directs its members in regards to their finances and evangelistic work. Furthermore, the Spirit "aids" the church in accomplishing its mission. Lastly, the church uses the sword of the Spirit (the Bible) to press its evangelistic agenda. Waggoner's commentary on the work of the Spirit in regards to mission once again tends towards a high pneumatology. Whether he embraced the full personhood of the Spirit cannot be established on missional comments alone, but it certainly allows for it. Towards the end of his publishing career the Spirit is ubiquitous in the life and mission of the church.

¹⁹⁰ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 71.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in Bestowing Spiritual Gifts

Analysis - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Bestowing Spiritual Gifts

In regards to the gifts of the Spirit, Waggoner provides little commentary throughout his book publications. In 1890 he makes references to the spiritual gifts. One was made in *The Sure Foundation and the Keys of The Kingdom*. Here Waggoner affirms the Scriptural record that the events of Pentecost in Acts 2, specifically the bestowal of the gift of tongues, was the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁹¹ He also affirms the fact that the possession of the Spirit also brings the possession of the Spirit in *Glad Tidings* (1900).¹⁹² Furthermore, Waggoner also depicts the Spirit as directing the use of the gifts.

Peter and John saw at the gate of the temple a man over forty years old, who had been lame from his birth. He had never

¹⁹¹ "It was the same with the apostles. On the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came on them, they began to speak, with tongues, 'as the Spirit gave them utterance.' We have before quoted the statement of Paul, that in making known the gospel he spoke, 'not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.'" Ellet Joseph Waggoner, *The Sure Foundation and the Keys of the Kingdom*, Bible Student's Library, No. 63, (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Co., 1890?), 12.

¹⁹² "The Spirit had been given to them, miracles had been wrought among them, and even by them, for the gifts of the Spirit accompany the gift of the Spirit." Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*.

walked. He was begging, and *Peter felt prompted by the Spirit* to give him something better than silver or gold. Said he, "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk..."¹⁹³

Notice Peter, does not act and use the gift of healing until he is "prompted by the Spirit." Thus, the Spirit not only bestows the gifts but also directs their proper usage. Lastly, Waggoner asserts that the Spirit strives with everyone in attempting to "induce" them to serve and use their talents and energies for God.¹⁹⁴

Ontological Insights - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Bestowing Spiritual Gifts

As in the case with the mission of the church, the Spirit seems to be the guide and orchestrator of the activities of the church even in regards to spiritual gifts. He is the giver of the gifts, directs their usage, and attempts to persuade and "induce" believers to use their talents for mission. All of these qualities and activities indicate more than a presence or force but rather indicate personhood and intelligence.

¹⁹³ Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, 90.

¹⁹⁴ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 42.

The Work of the Holy Spirit in
Bestowing the Fruits of the Spirit

**Analysis - The Work of the Holy Spirit in
Bestowing the Fruits of the Spirit**

Waggoner does discuss the fruits of the Spirit somewhat but rarely refers to them as the fruits of the Spirit, even though the context points to that end. For example, he states in *Bible Studies on Romans* (1891) that the result of having the Spirit is for the believer to "know the peace and joy of heaven."¹⁹⁵

Waggoner also refers to love as a result of having the Holy Spirit.¹⁹⁶

Most of his direct references to the fruit of the Spirit come from his treatise on the book of Galatians published in 1900. For example, Waggoner states that if you have the Spirit you are not under the law, because there is no law against the fruit of the Spirit.¹⁹⁷ Waggoner elaborates on the fruit of the Spirit as follows:

Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, must come forth spontaneously from the heart of the true follower of Christ. *They cannot be forced. But they do not dwell naturally in us.* It is natural for us to be angry and exasperated, instead of gentle and long-suffering, when opposed. Note the contrast between the works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit. The first come

¹⁹⁵ Waggoner, *Bible Studies on the Book of Romans*, 77. See also Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 171, 81.

¹⁹⁶ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 215, 29.

¹⁹⁷ Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, 224.

naturally; therefore, in order for the good fruit to be borne, we must be made completely over into new creatures. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good." Luke 6:45. *Goodness comes not from any man, but from the Spirit of Christ continually dwelling in him.*

Ontological Insights - The Work of the Holy Spirit in Bestowing the Fruits of the Spirit

For Waggoner the fruits of the Spirit cannot be manufactured. They are a byproduct of possessing the Spirit. Because of the sparsity of comments and elaboration that Waggoner makes on the fruit of the Spirit it is difficult to determine any ontological insights from the precious few statements he did produced. His understanding of the fruit of the Spirit leaves the door open for both a low pneumatology or a high pneumatology.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

Waggoner's pneumatology was anything but static. The Spirit in Waggoner's writings is very much like the Spirit in the testimony of Scripture. The Spirit is elusive at times, hard to define, yet His impress is ubiquitously present (at least from the middle period of his life onward) throughout most of Waggoner's writings. Waggoner's pneumatology, like his other beliefs, were not developed in a vacuum. Taken as a whole Waggoner's pneumatology appears incoherent; however, this deficiency of incoherence is somewhat remedied by segmenting Waggoner's published work into three periods: early "Semi-Arian" (1882 - 1887), middle "Righteousness by Faith" (1888 - 1896), and late "Mystical" (1897 - 1916).

Because he didn't address the issue forthrightly it is assumed that Waggoner was a product of his environment in his early publishing years. He was Semi-Arian and most likely denied the personhood of the Spirit, but even if this was his accepted theological paradigm. Generally, Waggoner's early works are basic discourses and appear to be influenced by his Semi-Arian upbringing. The Spirit is an influence or a presence and is even

objectified as the substance by which Christ was anointed at His baptism.

By the middle period of Waggoner's life, when his ministry received the endorsement of Ellen White, his pneumatology definitely trended towards Christian orthodoxy along with his Christology. This was a result of his heavy and almost all-consuming preoccupation with soteriological issues in his proclamation of righteousness by faith. Waggoner's heavy interest in the doctrine of salvation including: justification, sanctification, and assurance which required a higher Christology than his father's and which other early Sabbatarian Adventist pioneers professed. Waggoner's Christianity departed from a human or works-based emphasis to a grace and Christ-centered emphasis. To hold his theology together, Waggoner also needed a high doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture, which he maximized by adopting a verbal or mechanical inspiration model (as evidenced in *Christ and His Righteousness* and *Prophetic Lights*). This decision triggered the adoption of an equally high view of the Holy Spirit, as the Author of Scripture. Thus, by Waggoner's focus on soteriology, his theology proper (the doctrine of God) was illuminated and trended towards orthodoxy, though he never embraced a full acceptance of the Trinity. During the middle period of his writing career, Waggoner's pneumatology is rich with detail related to the works of the

Spirit, which betrays a subconscious acceptance of a functional Trinity in his theological framework. The Spirit is presented as an active agent most strongly in Waggoner's doctrine of Scripture and in soteriological matters. It would seem incomprehensible for Waggoner to maintain a strict Arianism or even a strong Semi-Arian framework, with the volume and manner of activities the Spirit performs as he describes in his middle publications. If Waggoner remained consciously anti-trinitarian and/or professed Semi-Arian, his pneumatology from his middle period says otherwise. What is more likely however, is that Waggoner could be functionally Trinitarian in his theology when he needed to be, while denying the reality (which is evidenced by his near ubiquitous use of impersonal pronouns to refer to the Spirit). His soteriology forced him to elevate Christ, and by extension this study argues the same for his conception of the Holy Spirit in relation to soteriology as well as the doctrine of Scripture.

However, Waggoner's late publications contain a mixed package of orthodoxy and panentheistic ideas, especially his volumes *The Everlasting Covenant* and *Glad Tidings*. In this later material, Waggoner seems to reverse his nearly uninterrupted practice of describing the Holy Spirit as a person and yet using impersonal pronouns. His latter publications, at times employ capitalized personal pronouns that could refer to the Spirit,

but he also explicitly negates the personhood of the Spirit in descriptions of the new earth. He describes what he views as the literal reality of the Spirit as being a stream that flows from the throne of God. The Spirit is the life force of the universe. The Spirit is a mediating instrument that projects the crucifixion event to sinners, turning them toward God. *The Everlasting Covenant* and *Glad Tidings* contain mystical elements that tend to depersonalize both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit in two different ways. Christ is reduced from a person to the crucifixion event, while the Spirit becomes merely a river or life force. His later statements on the Holy Spirit are confusing and contradictory. The Spirit possesses a mind but is also a stream of water. The difficulty of deciphering his later pneumatology appears also in his Christology.

Overall, Waggoner's pneumatology possesses an Arian or Semi-Arian flavor in his early period (pre-1888). There is a lack of the Spirit's appearance in Waggoner's early works and those that do appear are compatible with Arianism. Waggoner's middle period (1888-1896) exhibits a rich pneumatology that closely aligns with Christian orthodox conceptions of the Trinity, though he doubtless did not consider himself a Trinitarian. Nevertheless, his focus on soteriology seems to have forced him to adopt a functional Trinity in his theological framework even though he seems to have never accepted it

consciously. Waggoner's middle period is a departure from Arianism in both Christology as well as Pneumatology, the Spirit's work and personhood being critical to a viable soteriology based on a high view of the inspiration of the Bible. Waggoner's late period (post 1896) begins to reveal speculative elements that reflect an adoption of spiritualistic and panentheistic ideas. The Spirit is elusive, being the life force of the universe but can also be seen as a literal river flowing from the throne of God in the new earth. Thus, Waggoner's pneumatology seems to have lost the gains he made during his middle period.

In short, Waggoner's pneumatology was never wholly orthodox. It was probably Semi-Arian in his early career, approaching orthodoxy (at least functionally) in his middle period, but retrograded quickly into a confused mystical package of beliefs by 1900 with no evidence of a correction in his last published work *Confession of Faith* (1916). Essentially, Waggoner was not a professional theologian. He was not precise or consistent in his theology, even within the same period. His burden, theologically was geared towards practical concerns, such as personal salvation. He spoke and wrote as a soteriologist. His exploration into the precise identification of the persons within the Godhead is limited to its utility in holding his soteriological system together. Thus, he uses

contradictory language at times, even within the same period, in his exposition of his soteriology. Ultimately, his pre-1897 material contains language that trends largely towards a functional Trinity that necessitated not only the full divinity of Christ but also the personhood and agency of the Holy Spirit for his theological system to work. Otherwise his soteriology would have been deficient and prone to collapse. A future study that would include all of Waggoner's published materials, including sermons from General Conference bulletins, and his periodical publications may provide even more insight into Waggoner's pneumatology.

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